



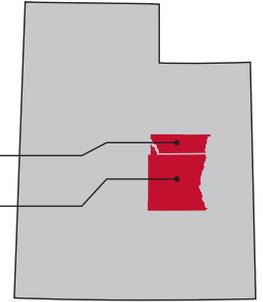
Utah Coal Country Strike Team

Executive Summary

America's well-placed desire to combat global climate change brings widespread societal benefits, but imposes concentrated costs in coal-dependent communities. These communities need to diversify their economies and retrain their workforce so they can avoid material poverty and psychological despair. The Utah Coal Country Strike Team brings multi-disciplinary, mission-focused, and data-driven expertise to Utah's coal country and will help raise the incomes of 10,000 households by 10 percent by the end of 2020. We propose to leverage each \$1 of Alliance for the American Dream funding with \$2.5 from other sources. With the Alliance's help, the Utah Coal Country Strike Team can serve as a national model for helping coal-dependent communities as America transitions away from coal.

The Heart of Utah's Coal Country

Carbon County
Emery County



Proposal Summary

Problem

The rightfully placed desire to combat climate change is creating economic hardship in Utah's Coal Country. The region suffers from a nine-year recession and faces a bleak economic outlook.

Idea

Form a Utah Coal Country Strike Team to help diversify the economy and provide urgent public policy support. We believe four interventions will be necessary to meet the goal.

- 1. Workforce Training and Jobs** - Diversify the economy by providing an array of IT and other training with a pathway to jobs. We call this intervention Silicon Slopes East+.
- 2. Housing Revitalization** – Prioritize investment in Utah's Coal Country housing stock to increase wealth and create a more attractive community. We call this intervention Hearth and Home.
- 3. Tourism Infrastructure** – Diversify the economy by investing in tourism infrastructure. Utah's Coal Country is the closest desert red rock to the Greater Salt Lake Area. We call this intervention Red Rock Gateway.
- 4. Economic Development Incentives** – Fix broken economic development incentives with customized tax policy that actually works. We call this intervention Custom Incentives.

Key Metrics

We measure our success by tracking data from a model we created that forecasts changes in total income. We call it the American Dream Model. The model tracks personal income in Utah's Coal Country as a proxy for household income. This enables us to track our progress towards the 10 percent goal and make mid-course corrections as needed.

Innovative Element

We bring a highly focused, well-resourced, and multi-disciplinary "Strike Team" to the challenge facing Utah's Coal Country. We assign economists, data scientists, demographers, sociologists, political scientists, economic development professionals, and other specialists to a domestic policy problem – the vexing challenge facing coal country.

We have also developed an innovative, counterfactual model to track our success. This evaluation model incorporates data from 150 coal-dependent communities around the country to create estimates of total income in Utah's coal country with and without our public policy interventions.

Supporting Research

We have reviewed research from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, Appalachian Regional Commission, Marshall University (West Virginia), Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania, University of Tennessee, and other sources to identify best practices in preventing and mitigating economic distress in coal-dependent communities.

Partners

We have assembled a Strike Team of elected officials, public policy experts, and business and community leaders. A partnership of more than 70 individuals, representing a wide range of businesses, non-profits, and educational institutions support the Strike Team.

Budget

We propose a \$3.5 million budget that includes \$2.5 for every \$1 of Alliance for the American Dream funding. The budget includes a 50-50, private-public partnership to achieve the 10 percent goal.

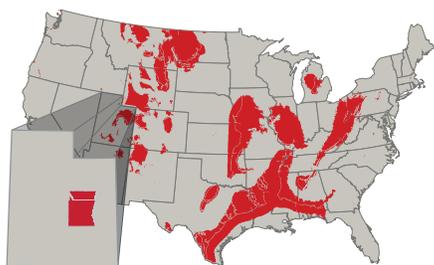
The Problem

Greater Appalachia Coal Country in the eastern United States is well known for what J.D. Vance has called “a hub of misery.” Vance, the best-selling author of *Hillbilly Elegy*, documents not just the story of economic insecurity and the loss of jobs in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio, but also a culture of social decay where people have lost the ability to be self-reliant.

This same troubled reality exists in the high eastern desert of Utah, where coal production has declined by 47 percent since its peak in 2001. The economy in Utah’s Coal Country – consisting of Carbon and Emery counties – has contracted in each of the last nine years. Employment declines, high unemployment, net out-migration, high poverty rates, housing price depreciation, and one of the highest opioid death rates in the nation imperil a community that needs help.

With the help of the Alliance for the American Dream, we will help Utah’s Coal Country to diversify their economy and benefit from greater economic opportunity.

Utah and U.S. Coal Country



Utah’s Coal Country Recession

Employment Change
2008-2017

U.S. **+7%** | Utah **+17%** | Utah Coal Country **-16%**

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

- **Jobs** – Employment in Utah’s Coal Country has decreased by 16 percent since 2008. This stands in sharp contrast to U.S. job increases of 7 percent and Utah job growth of 17 percent over the same period. Coal Country experienced employment declines in each year since 2010.
- **Unemployment** – Unemployment in Utah’s Coal Country is approximately 5 percent, which registers two percentage points higher than statewide unemployment, and would be even higher if not for net out-migration.
- **Out-migration** – Carbon County has experienced net out-migration every year since the 2010 Census and Emery County has experienced net out-migration in five of the last eight years.¹
- **Personal income** – Personal income declined in Utah’s Coal Country by 13 percent from 2011-2016.² This compares to a 12.7 percent increase at the national level over the same period, and a 20.8 percent increase in personal income in Utah.
- **Poverty** – An estimated 4,386 people, or 14.3 percent of the population, currently live in poverty in Utah’s Coal Country.³ An estimated 1,575 of those in poverty are children under 18, resulting in a child poverty rate of nearly one in every five children (18 percent).
- **Economic diversity** – Emery County ranks as the fourth least economically diverse county in Utah.⁴ Carbon County, which functions as a regional center for commerce and has a more diverse economy, still ranks as 13th least economically diverse among Utah’s 29 counties.
- **Housing** – An estimated one in every five housing units in Utah’s Coal Country are vacant. Housing inventories in the region register among the oldest in the state.⁵ Carbon and Emery counties are also two of only five counties in Utah where median sales price of a home in 2017 was lower than in 2010.⁶ Households in the area are experiencing a decline in wealth due to falling housing prices.
- **Opioid crisis** – Utah’s Coal Country faces an opioid crisis that may be another symptom of economic hardship. Opioid death rates are over three times the rates for the entire state and nation.⁷ In 2016, there were more opioid prescriptions in Utah’s Coal Country than people.⁸ Carbon County has one of the highest prescription opioid dispensing rates in the U.S., and is one of the most at-risk areas in the U.S. for infectious disease outbreaks because of needle use for heroin.⁹

Utah Coal Country Facts

Trend	Production	Coal-fired electricity	Coal dependence	Coal jobs	Power plants
Utah’s coal production peaked in 2001 and has declined in 12 of the past 17 years.	Utah ranks 11 th among states for coal production at 14.3 million tons in 2017.	Utah ranks 10 th among states for the highest amount of coal-fired electricity.	44 percent of Utah’s electricity comes from coal-fired power plants.	925 coal mining jobs in Carbon and Emery counties in 2018, down from 2,526 in 1985.	Utah’s Hunter and Huntington power plants are likely to close within the decade.

Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute

The Idea

The Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute joins Utah's Lt. Governor Spencer Cox; U.S. Congressman John Curtis; the mayors of Price and Castle Dale, Utah; county commissioners from Carbon and Emery counties, Utah; Utah State University (our sister university); and other business and community leaders to create a Utah Coal Country Strike Team. Like a Navy Seal Team expertly trained to deliver highly specialized assistance beyond a standard military force, we bring together a well-resourced,

multi-disciplinary, and mission-driven team of economists, demographers, data scientists, sociologists, political scientists, geographers, real estate professionals, and other experts to diversify the economy in Utah's Coal Country. We seek to raise the incomes of 10,000 households by 10 percent by the end of 2020. Our chosen initiatives (plural because we don't think a single intervention will get the job done) include Silicon Slopes East+, Red Rock Gateway, Hearth and Home, and Custom Incentives.

The Four Initiatives



Silicon Slopes East+: Carbon and Emery counties are only 90 minutes from Utah's rapidly growing tech industry located along "Silicon Slopes" and headquartered in Lehi, Utah. Our Silicon Slopes East+ initiative calls for a job training partnership with dozens of Utah companies willing to invest in Utah's Coal Country. We provide more detail on this initiative in the subsequent pages.



Red Rock Gateway: The region's natural attractions include the San Rafael Swell, Buckhorn Wash, Range Creek, 9-Mile Canyon, and more sites that attract visitors from around the world. Helper, Utah is becoming a hot spot for art studios and art galleries. This iconic mining town has the potential to be a vibrant urban getaway. Our Red Rock Gateway initiative calls for the creation of a tourism infrastructure fund to assist with economic diversification.



Hearth and Home: Carbon and Emery counties have two of the oldest housing inventories in the state and the median sales price has dropped about 10 percent since 2010. Our Hearth and Home initiative aims to stop this decline through revitalization investments and renew housing price appreciation in the area.



Custom Incentives: We believe economic development incentives in Utah's Coal Country are broken. Few businesses use them and our interviews with locals and economic development experts affirmed they aren't working. Our Custom Incentives initiative includes repairing the broken economic development incentives and a strategy for opportunity zone investment.

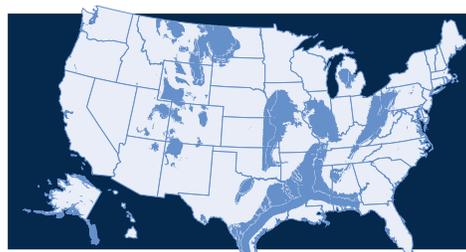
Scale Potential

The United States has approximately 150 coal-dependent communities. An analysis by the Brookings Institution concluded these communities will continue to face significant economic hardship because of stagnant domestic electricity demand, advances in competing generation technologies, unfavorable export conditions, and deepening concern about climate change.

Coal-dependent communities face a choice: they can act, or they can be acted upon. The Strike Team model favors action. The

Coal Country Roadmap developed by the Strike Team is a national model for others to follow. Every coal-dependent community in the nation can bring together a mission-focused, multi-disciplinary, locally led, and data-driven group of experts to review challenges, assess strengths, develop custom public policies, and measure success. The solutions will not be the same, but the process holds promise for every coal-dependent community in America.

Coal Country Roadmap



Form Strike Team

- Mission-focused
- Multi-disciplinary
- Locally Led
- Data-driven

Review Challenges

Assess Strengths

Develop Public Policies

Measure Success

Raise Household Income by 10%

Mid-course Corrections

Silicon Slopes East+ Additional Details

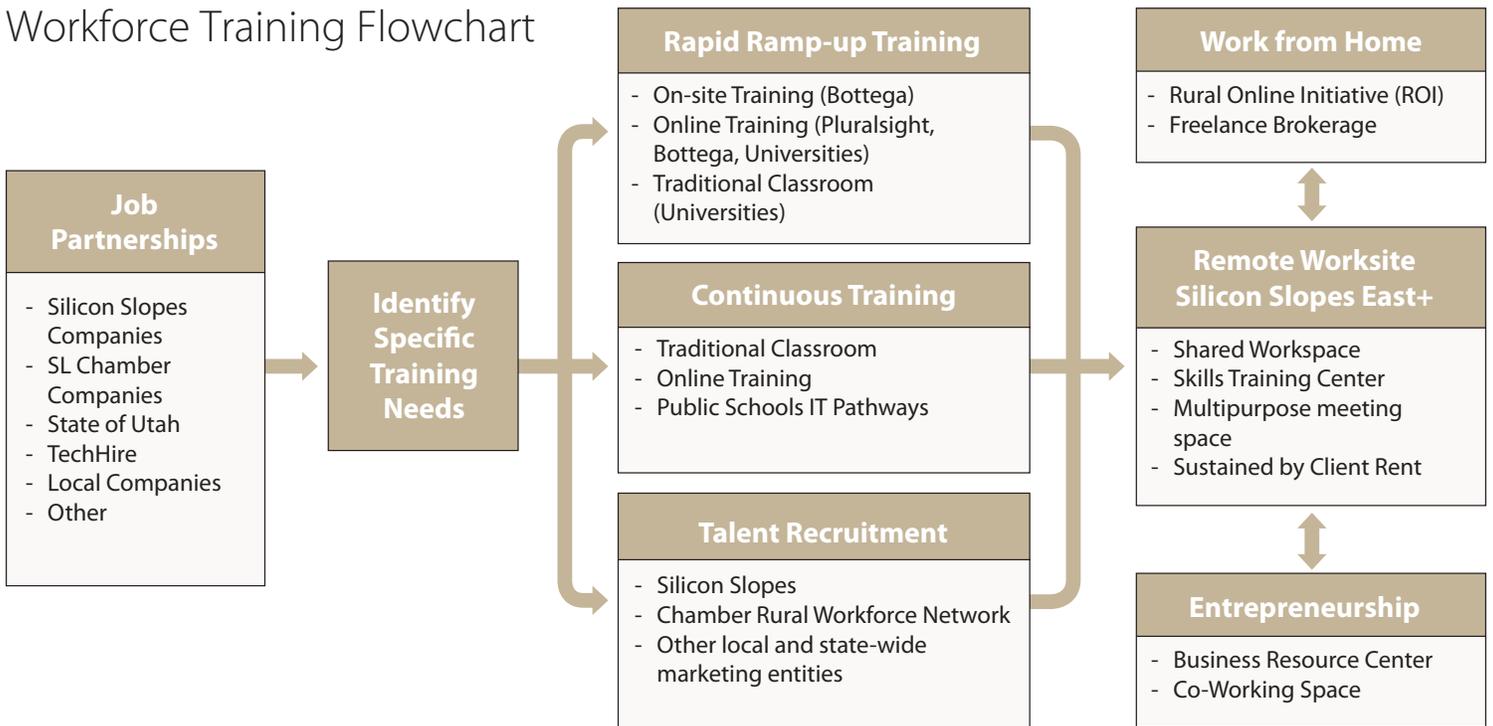
The workforce training initiative that we call Silicon Slopes East+ warrants additional detail. We have in place partnerships, matching funds, plans for a remote worksite, and a training process with options that will significantly enhance the local workforce. Our strategy will deliver the following:

- **Partnerships** – Bring together Utah employers with training opportunities in Utah’s Coal Country.
- **Identify needs** – Survey employers to identify specific training needs.
- **Scholarships and Training** – Provide scholarships for unemployed, underemployed, and transitioning labor force to

receive onsite, online, and traditional classroom training. The menu of training options include creative, technical, healthcare, tourism/service, and manufacturing pathways.

- **Talent recruitment** – Recruit managerial expertise to the area that is currently unavailable.
- **Remote worksite** – Purchase and renovate a building on Price City Main Street to provide shared workspace, a skills training center, and co-working space for Silicon Slopes companies.

Workforce Training Flowchart



Training Options

Individual Interest	Education/Training			
Creative	Digital Design*	Web-based Design*	Digital Product Design*	
Technical	Coding*	Cybersecurity*	Engineering Drafting and Design Technology*	
Healthcare	Medical Coding* Medical Billing*	Medical Transcription* Medical Assistant	Pharmacy Tech Surgical Tech	Phlebotomy
Tourism/Service	Sustainable Tourism & Hospitality Management	Project Management Bookkeeping	Trail Steward Program Landscape Architecture	
Manufacturing	Automotive Technology	Building Construction and Construction Management	Heavy Equipment and Trucking	Machine Tool Technology

*Can be flexible/work from home



Utah Coal Country Strike Team

June 14, 2019

We, the following Utah employers and organizations, endorse the Utah Coal Country Strike Team. We commit our best efforts to help identify training needs for our companies/organizations and consider remote job and business expansion opportunities in Utah's Coal Country.

Further, we recognize the value to our companies/organizations of the many economic assets found in Utah's Coal Country, including ubiquitous broadband, close proximity to urban Utah, significant transportation assets (including federal interstate, airport, and rail), a public university (Utah State University-Eastern), high quality workforce, spectacular natural scenery, energy assets, and other advantages.

We welcome the opportunity to work with the Utah Coal Country Strike Team to help diversify the economy in Utah's Coal Country and achieve a 10 percent increase in household income of 10,000 households.

Thank you for recognizing the need for a healthier and more robust middle class. By supporting ideas like the Utah Coal Country Strike Team, the American Dream Ideas Challenge and Schmidt Futures will help reduce income disparity, increase economic mobility, and enhance our country's competitiveness.

The Utah Coal Country Strike Team can serve as a national model for these noble objectives.

With appreciation,

Blacksmith International
Bottega
City Creek Center
Chamber Rural
Workforce Network
Clyde Companies
Deseret Management
Corporation
Domo, Inc.
Governor's Office of
Economic Development
Economic Development
Corporation of Utah

Infinite Scale
Insidesales.com
Ivory Homes
LSI Corporation
Wasatch Group
Pluralsight
Qualtrics
R&R Partners
Rural Online Initiative
Salt Lake Chamber
Silicon Slopes
UAMMI

University of Utah
University of Utah Health
Utah Division of
Workforce Services
Utah Community Builders
Utah State University
Wellington Microtech
Zions Bank

UTAH COAL COUNTRY STRIKE TEAM

Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute | David Eccles School of Business | 411 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111 | 801-585-5618 | gardner.utah.edu/striketeam

Measures of Success

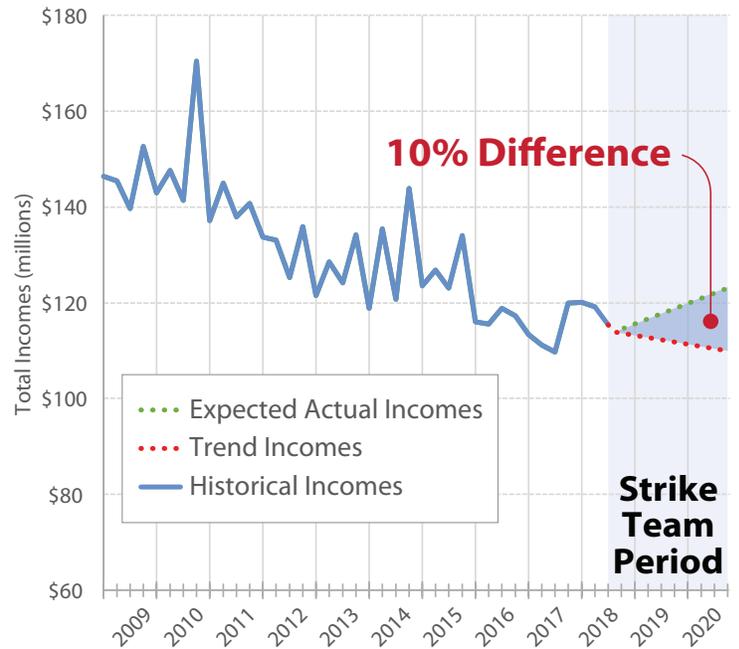
The American Dream Ideas Challenge set an aggressive goal of achieving a 10 percent increase in household income of 10,000 households by the end of 2020. We face two challenges in meeting this goal: 1) Putting in place the necessary interventions to achieve it, and 2) Measuring progress each quarter to know if we are being successful and making adjustments if we are not.

We created an American Dream Model to measure our success. The model tracks total incomes in Utah's Coal Country as a proxy for household income. We track our success by creating two estimates of incomes. The first estimate evaluates incomes in Carbon and Emery counties without our work. We call this "trend income" and it serves as the counterfactual for measuring the impact of our success. This trend income is based on the performance of 150 other similar coal communities in the country. Measures of similarity include the level of coal dependence, past income growth, geographic location, levels of opioid challenges, and other measures. The second estimate includes actual income performance in Utah's Coal Country.

We plan to track the differences in these two estimates each quarter so we can make adjustments in our interventions as needed. By the end of 2020 we plan to obtain a 10 percent difference between the trend incomes and the actual incomes.

We are excited to show other coal communities around the country how they too can use this evidence-based model to measure success.

The American Dream Model Tracker Actual Incomes compared to Trend Incomes



Source: Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute (model) and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (data).

Innovative and Technical Elements

We bring a highly focused, well-resourced, and multi-disciplinary "strike team" to the challenge facing Utah's Coal Country. We are not aware of any community in the country that has done something similar. Capitalizing on the strengths of two public universities, we replicate at the public policy level, what the U.S. military does when it assigns a special operations force to a foreign policy problem. In this case, we assign economists, data scientists, demographers, sociologists, political scientists, economic development professionals, and other specialists to a domestic policy problem – the vexing challenge facing coal country.

This work requires us to analyze large datasets from the Energy Information Administration, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Census Bureau, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Utah Office of Tourism, and other sources. We have also developed an innovative, counterfactual model to track our success. This evaluation model incorporates data from 150 coal-dependent communities around the country to create estimates of total incomes in Utah's Coal



The Utah Coal Country Strike Team in October, 2018 during a Strike Team visit.

Country with and without our public policy interventions. Unlike some public policy proposals, we will know on a quarterly basis whether our ideas are working. We will also be able to make policy changes as necessary to meet the goal of a 10 percent increase in household income for 10,000 households.

Supporting Research

The decline in coal production in Utah and other parts of the country is projected to continue.¹⁰ The significant reduction in natural gas pricing, regulatory changes that increased the costs of burning coal, and weak international demand are among the drivers that have reduced demand for coal.¹¹ Coal production in Utah declined 47 percent since the peak in 2001.¹² West Virginia, the second largest coal producing state, saw a similar decline of 38 percent between 2008 and 2015.¹³ In coal communities across the nation, the production decline is causing reduced personal incomes, rising unemployment, plummeting home values, deteriorating health, rising substance abuse, increasing demand for government services, declining populations, and reductions in tax revenues for counties and school districts.¹⁴

There exists a paradox in coal country, whether in Appalachia or Utah. These areas contain beauty, natural resources, and people who are deeply connected to the community, but they are burdened with pockets of poverty.¹⁵ Fortunately, lessons learned in other areas of the nation can help Utah's Coal Country prosper.

- **Economic diversity with a tourism focus** has been successful in other coal communities, including revitalizing downtown districts and development of the arts. The lack of infrastructure, inadequate marketing, and inadequate workforce training are barriers to tourism development in rural communities. Many communities would benefit from increased awareness of tourism funding and technical assistance for marketing efforts.¹⁶
- **Workforce training and technology** is essential to ensuring a successful economic transition in coal communities. "In economic development, as in real estate, location matters. Rural communities located near urban areas or

major employment centers enjoy a decided competitive advantage." Proximity to large research institutions or satellite campuses can be leveraged for workforce training. Developable land and broadband availability will also provide advantages to coal communities.¹⁷

- **Planning assistance and financing options** for rural counties are needed to help community leaders diversify their economies as coal production continues to decline. Assistance with planning, funding for planning support, and grant opportunities have all been useful in other communities.¹⁸
- **Social capital** matters in distressed communities. Social capital is the glue that binds a community together – "it is found in community groups, organizations, and efforts towards developing common goals."¹⁹ Social capital in Utah's Coal Country is strong and will provide an advantage as the two counties transition their economy.
- **Local economic development planning** has been a priority in Utah's Coal Country. At the request of Utah Gov. Gary Herbert, Carbon and Emery counties submitted economic development plans.²⁰ In addition, the Western Rural Development Center prepared a summary of economic development in both counties.²¹ The Coraggio Group prepared a destination development plan for Carbon County.²² Each of these studies acknowledged the challenges and potential of Utah's Coal Country and reaffirmed the need to diversify the local economy.

Referenced Studies

Bowen, Eric, Christiadi, John Deskins, and Brian Elgo, 2018. *An Overview of the Coal Economy in Appalachia*.

Carley, Sanja, Tom P. Evans, and David M. Konisky, 2018, "Adaptation, culture, and the energy transition in America's Coal Country." *Energy Research and Social Science* 37, pg 133-139.

Harvey, Curtis E. 1986. *Coal in Appalachia: An Economic Analysis*. Lexington: KY: The University Press of Kentucky.

Ezzell, Tim, Dayton Lambert, Eric Ogle. February 2012. *Strategies for Economic Improvement in Appalachia's Distressed Counties*. Knoxville TN: University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Haggery, Julia H., Mark N. Haggerty, Kelli Roemer, and Jackson Rose. 2018. "Planning for the local impacts of coal facility closure: Emergency strategies in the U.S. West." *Resource Policy*, 57, pg 69-80.

Kent, Cal. 2016. *The Cruel Coal Facts: The Impact on West Virginia Counties from the Collapse of the Coal Economy*. Huntington, WV: Marshall University Center for Business and Economic Research.

Mayer, Adam. 2018. "A just transition for coal miners. Community identity and support from local policy actors." *Environmental Innovation and Social Transitions* 28, pg. 1-13.

Simeone, Christina, Theodora Okiro, and Deshaun Bennett. 2018. *Reimagining Pennsylvania's Coal Communities*. Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania.

"U.S. coal exports on the decline." *UPI Security & Terrorism*, 7 Mar. 2016.

U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2018. *Coal Explained: Where Our Coal Comes From*

U.S. Energy Information Administration. *Quarterly Coal Report*, Q4 2017.

U.S. Energy Information Administration. *Annual Coal Report*, 1994-2016.

Next Steps

We began this work in August 2018 and are ramping up to deliver on the goal of raising the incomes of 10,000 households by 10 percent by the end of 2020. To meet this goal requires urgent action and we are proceeding with pace. The Utah Legislature appropriated \$500,000 to the Utah Coal Country

Strike Team in the 2019 General Legislative Session. We are also pursuing partnerships with Utah businesses and additional sources of funding to assist with scholarships for workforce training, tourism infrastructure investment fund, and housing assistance.

Budget

The Utah Coal Country Strike Team plans to leverage up to \$1 million in prize funding with a 2.5-1 match of state and federal and other private funds. In this way we will rapidly ramp up our policy interventions to stimulate a 10 percent increase in income for 10,000 households by the end of 2020. Approximately 80 percent of the Alliance for the American Dream funding over

the two years will be programmed for curriculum development, equipment, scholarships, and a remote worksite for the Silicon Slopes East initiative. Another 10 percent will support tourism infrastructure, and the remaining 10 percent will assist with housing revitalization.

Sources and Uses of Funds

FY 20-21

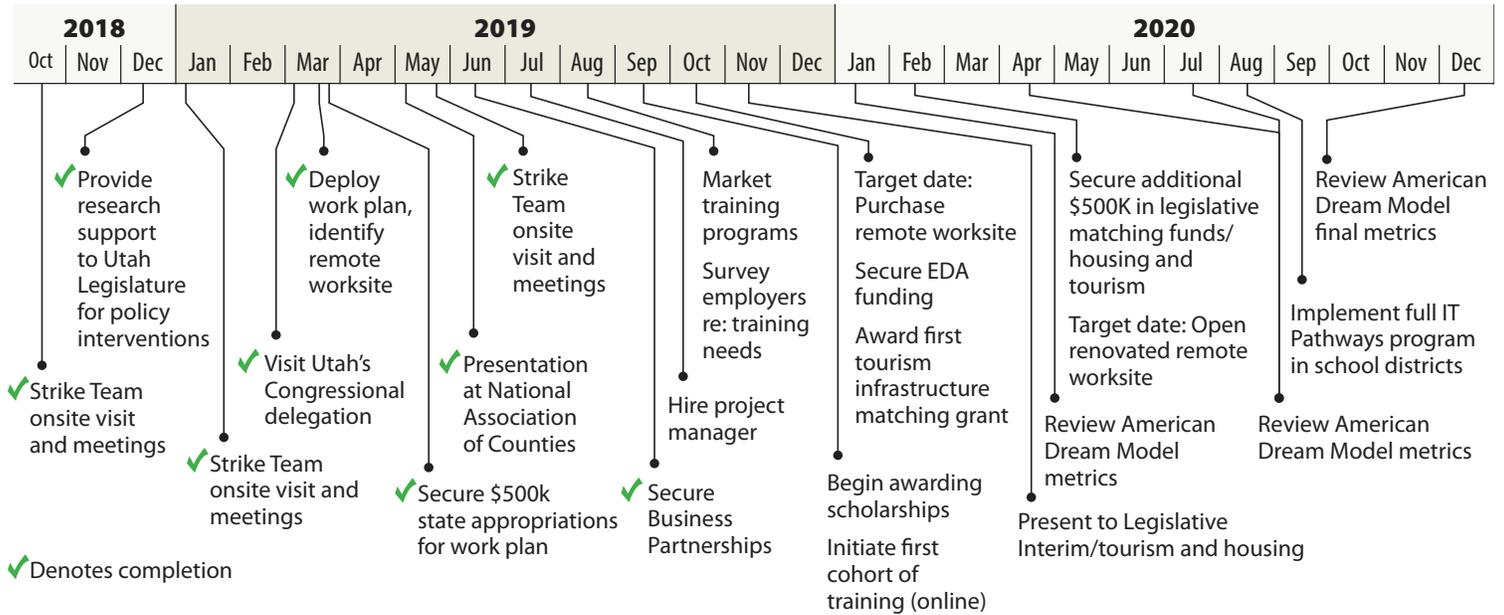
	PRIVATE			PUBLIC			TOTAL
	Alliance for the American Dream	Other	Subtotal	State	Federal	Subtotal	
Workforce Training (Silicon Slopes East+)	\$800K	\$300	\$1.1M	\$500K	\$700K	\$1.2M	\$2.3M
Tourism Infrastructure (Red Rock Gateway)	\$100K	\$100K	\$200K	\$250K		\$250K	\$450K
Housing Revitalization (Hearth and Home)	\$100K	\$100K	\$200K	\$250K		\$250K	\$450K
Economic Development Support (Custom Incentives)		\$250K	\$250K		\$50K	\$50K	\$300K
Total	\$1.0M	\$750K	\$1.75M	\$1.0M	\$750K	\$1.75M	\$3.5M

50/50 Public/Private Funding
2.5-1 Leverage of Alliance for the American Dream Funds

Silicon Slopes East+ Detailed Budget

Personnel	One-Time	FY20	FY21	Totals
Salaries and benefits (program manager and office manager)		\$138,000	\$142,000	\$280,000
Non-Personnel				
Training: On-Site Tech Skills		\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000
Training: Online Training		\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,000
Training: Traditional Univ. Classes		\$100,000	\$100,000	\$200,000
Training: IT Pathways in public schools		\$100,000	-	\$100,000
Telephones		\$17,000	\$17,000	\$34,000
Custodial		\$18,000	\$18,000	\$36,000
Supplies		\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
Utilities		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$30,000
Building (purchase and remodel)	\$500,000			500,000
Equipment (computers and software)	\$180,000			\$180,000
Office Furniture	\$130,000			\$130,000
Total	\$810,000	\$793,000	\$697,000	\$2,300,000

Utah Coal Country Strike Team Proposed Timeline



Select Milestones

Held Strike Team Onsite Visits and Meetings

We realize the importance of the Strike Team being “locally led” in order to get the support for successful changes in the community. We have had three multi-day onsite visits in Carbon and Emery counties with the Strike Team, elected officials, community advisors, and technical advisors. We have also had more than a dozen in-person meetings with the local elected officials, community and economic development staff, school district superintendents, the USU-Eastern vice provost, tourism specialists, and business leaders.

Provided Research Support to the Utah Legislature

The Strike Team and technical advisors provided expertise in workforce development, tourism, housing, and public policy to elected officials during the 2018 Utah Legislative Session. Presentations were made to the Business, Economic Development, and Labor Appropriations Subcommittee, Utah Health Council, Utah Energy Council, and the Utah Economic Council.

Visited Utah’s Congressional Delegation and National Policy Leaders

On April 9-11, 2019, representatives from the Strike Team met with the Utah Congressional delegation, including Sen. Mitt Romney, Sen. Mike Lee, Rep. John Curtis, and staff from Rep. Chris Stewart and Rep. Ben McAdams’ offices. Each elected official committed their support. We also met with the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Development Organizations, and the U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee.

Secured \$500K State Appropriations

Utah Legislature appropriated \$500,000 “to support the Utah Coal Country Strike Team for personnel, curriculum development, scholarships, equipment, and a remote worksite in Price City, Utah” during the 2019 Legislative Session. The monies will become available July 1, 2019.

Presented at the National Association of Counties

Representatives from the Strike Team presented our plan at the Strengthening Economic in the West: Coal-Reliant Communities Challenge on May 3, 2019. This conference was held in partnership with NACO, NADO, and EDA for communities in Colorado, Arizona, Utah, Wyoming, and surrounding states.

Meet with the Economic Development Administration

Strike Team members met with staff from the Economic Development Administration in Denver, Colorado about funding opportunities for the Coal Country Strike Team’s workforce development initiative, Silicon Slopes East+.

Secured Utah Business Community Support

More than two dozen employers and organizations, with over 5,000 total employees, have endorsed the Utah Coal Country Strike Team and committed their best efforts to help identify training needs for employees and consider remote job and business expansion opportunities in Utah’s Coal Country. We anticipate this list will continue to grow as Utah employers see the value of the business opportunity in Carbon and Emery counties, the benefits to urban Utah, and the contribution it makes to the greater good.

Partners of the Utah Coal Country Strike Team

STRIKE TEAM MEMBERS

Honorary Co-Chairs

Congressman John Curtis

Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox

Mike Kourianos/co-chair

Mayor, Price City

Natalie Gochnour/co-chair

*Director, Kem C. Gardner
Policy Institute*

Danny Van Wagoner

Mayor, Castle Dale City

Kent Wilson

Commissioner, Emery County

Tony Martines

Commissioner, Carbon County

Gary Straquadine

*Vice Provost, Associate
Vice President, Utah State
University – Eastern*

Lorie Fowlke

*District Director,
Congressman Curtis*

Ginger Chinn

*Managing Director, Governor's
Office of Economic Development*

Clint Betts

*Executive Director,
Silicon Slopes*

Geri Gamber

*Executive Director,
Southeastern Utah Association
of Local Governments*

Stuart Clason

*Regional Economic Growth
Director, Utah Association of
Counties*

Mike McCandless

*Executive Committee,
Governor's Rural
Partnership Board*

Jennifer Robinson

*Associate Director, Kem C.
Gardner Policy Institute*

Nick Tatton

*Community and Economic
Development Director,
Price City*

Rita Vigor

*Economic Development
Specialist, Carbon County*

Gina Gagon

*Chair, Community
Economic Council*

Wes Curtis

Senior Rural Advisor

Max Backlund

*Director, Utah Community
Builders Foundation,
Salt Lake Chamber*

The Strike Team is a highly focused and multi-disciplinary team. We seek to raise the incomes in Utah's Coal Country of 10,000 households by 10 percent by the end of 2020. The members represent their respective organizations and bring specialized expertise to the strike team.

Elected Officials Cabinet

Congressman John Curtis
Senator Mike Lee
Senator Mitt Romney
Governor Gary Herbert
Christine Watkins, Representative,
Utah Legislature
David Hinkins, Senator, Utah Legislature
Casey Hopes, Commissioner, Carbon County
Tony Martines, Commissioner, Carbon County
Larry Jensen, Commissioner, Carbon County
Lynn Sitterud, Commissioner, Emery County
Gil Conover, Commissioner, Emery County
Kent Wilson, Commissioner, Emery County
Lenise Peterman, Mayor, Helper
Joan Powell, Mayor, Wellington
David Avery, Mayor, East Carbon
Travis Bacon, Mayor, Green River

Community Advisors

Adriana Chimaras, Director of Travel and
Tourism, Emery County
Greg Cook, CFO, Castleview Hospital
Larry Davis, Superintendent,
Emery School District
Cameron Diehl, Director, Utah League of Cities
and Towns
Delynn Fielding, former Carbon
Economic Development Director
Roberta Hardy, Principal,
Pinnacle Canyon Academy
Lance Hatch, Superintendent,
Carbon School District
Tina Henrie, Tourism Specialist, Carbon County
Brock Johansen, CEO, Emery Telecom
Karl Kraync, Chairman, BEAR
Jordan Leonard, Program Coordinator,
Rural Online Initiative
Tara McKee, Utah Office of
Outdoor Recreation
Ethan Migliori, Emery County
Frank Peczuh, Owner, Peczuh Printing
Todd Thorne, Zoning Administrator,
Carbon County
Vicky Varela, Managing Director,
Utah Office of Tourism
Nicholina Womack, CEO, Future Indesign

Technical Advisors

Silicon Slopes East

Wes Curtis (Lead)
Courtney McBeth (Lead)
Max Backlund (Lead)
Clint Betts
Marin Christensen
Levi Pace

Hearth & Home

Jim Wood (Lead)
Dejan Eskic (Lead)
Laura Summers (Lead)
Mallory Bateman
DJ Benway
Mike Hollingshaus
Thomas Holst
Ashley Yaughner
Natalie Young

Redrock Gateway

Jennifer Leaver (Lead)
Samantha Ball
Adriana Chimaras
Mike Christensen
Emily Harris
Tina Henrie

Custom Incentives

John Downen (Lead)
Patrick Mullen
Angela J. Oh
Joshua Spolsdoff

Supporting Research

Jennifer Robinson (Lead)
Taylor Randall (Dean)
Michael T. Hogue (Lead)
Meredith King
Shelley Kruger
Colleen Larson
Dianne Meppen
Pamela S. Perlich
Cassie Slattery
Paul Springer
Nick Tatton
Juliette Tennert
Nick Thiriot

Elected Officials, Community Advisors, and Technical Advisors provide input on the work of the strike team to increase the income of 10,000 households in Coal County by 10 percent by the end of 2020.

Strike Team Member Bios

Congressman John Curtis, honorary co-chair of the Strike Team. Congressman Curtis represents Carbon and Emery counties, as well as surrounding counties, in Washington, D.C. He previously served as Mayor of Provo City, and was nationally recognized for his commitment to citizen engagement by using social media. He provides expertise in communication with his constituents and a drive to deliver their message to the Capitol.

Lt. Governor Spencer Cox, honorary co-chair of the Strike Team. Lt. Gov. Cox was born and raised in rural Sanpete County where he has chosen to raise his own family to teach his children the value of hard work and collaboration. Before being sworn in as Lieutenant Governor in 2008, he served as a Councilman and Mayor of Fairview City, Sanpete County Commissioner and a Utah House Representative. His deep ties to rural Utah and his involvement in Utah government provides immense support to the Strike Team.

Mayor Michael Kourianos co-chairs the Strike Team. Mr. Kourianos is the Mayor of Price, Utah. He has made economic development in Price a top priority, listening to development experts share improvement opportunities for Price and making government services more accessible. He provides significant local insight and knowledge to the Strike Team.

Natalie Gochnour co-chairs the Strike Team. Ms. Gochnour is the director of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute and associate dean at the David Eccles School of Business. Her diverse mix of public service and business experience gives her a unique insight in applied economic and business research. She will bring her strong policy and economic background to the Strike Team.

Mayor Danny Van Wagoner is the Mayor of Castle Dale, the county seat of Emery County. He has made the growth and stability of Castle Dale a primary goal - promoting tourism, improving city buildings, and engaging with the people. He will bring local understanding and awareness to the Strike Team.

Nick Tatton is the Community and Economic Development Director of Price, Utah and Chair of United Way of Eastern Utah. He has played a critical role in several of the community's latest developments including Castlevue Hospital's new urgent care facility. He brings experience in local collaboration to the Strike Team.

Max Backlund advises the Strike Team on business development. Currently, he serves as the Director of the Utah Community Builders at the Salt Lake Chamber. Mr. Backlund is a proven community developer and brings a young, creative, and tech-oriented approach to the team. With experience serving as the conduit between communities and businesses, he bridges the gap from the public and the private sector- helping ensure the success of both the businesses and communities of Carbon and Emery County. He brings expertise in business development to the Strike Team.

Clint Betts advises the Strike Team on technology innovation and entrepreneurship. Mr. Betts is the Executive Director of Silicon Slopes and Editor-in-Chief of Beehive Startups. Silicon Slopes is a nonprofit organization that exists to empower Utah's tech community to learn, connect, and serve in order to make entrepreneurship open and accessible to all. Mr. Betts will bring innovation and connectivity with the Wasatch Front to the Strike Team.

Ginger Chinn advises the Strike Team on state incentives. Ms. Chinn serves as the managing director for urban and rural business services for the Governor's Office of Economic Development. She directs a strategic growth plan for Utah's industry cluster program and manages GOED's rural programs and workforce development initiatives. She brings her expertise in state policy to the Strike Team.

Stuart Clason advises the Strike Team on economic development in rural Utah and opportunity zone strategies. Mr. Clason is the Regional Economic Growth Director at the Utah Association of Counties where he works to advance county issues on the state and federal level. He brings 15 years of proven experience working in public, private, and nonprofit sectors of Utah along with a strong educational background in economic development. Mr. Clason's experience working in the public and the private sector of economic development brings invaluable knowledge and experience in a variety of areas to the Strike Team.

Wes Curtis is the senior advisor to the Strike Team, providing a lifetime of expertise on rural and public policy. Mr. Curtis recently retired as the executive director of Regional Services at Southern Utah University. He was also the director of the Utah Center for Rural Life and the Utah Rural Development Council. Mr. Curtis staffed two Utah governors, in charge of rural affairs, was on the Governor's Rural Partnership Board, and was former Vice President of Partners for Rural America. Wes brings expertise in rural economic development to the Strike Team.

Lorie Fowlke advises the Strike Team on community development. Ms. Fowlke works as the district director for Rep. John Curtis where she uses her expertise to oversee all district offices and keep abreast of local concerns. Formerly, she served six years in the Utah House of Representatives and brings a unique skill set to the team as someone who served as an elected official. She brings valuable experience in the public sector, leadership, and community outreach to the Strike Team.

Gina Gagon advises the Strike Team on economic development. Ms. Gagon serves as a trustee for Utah State University and also chairs the Community Economic Council (CEC), a group of private, education, and government representatives working toward diversifying and growing economic activities for Carbon County. Ms. Gagon brings valuable knowledge and local perspective on community and economic development to the Strike Team.

Geri Gamber advises the Strike Team on economic development. Ms. Gamber is the executive director at Southeastern Utah Association of Local Governments. She is an experienced community development manager with a demonstrated history of working in the government administration industry. She has managed the HEAT Program, the local food bank, the VITA program, and rapid rehousing program in the area. Ms. Gamber brings a comprehensive understanding of the needy in the area to the Strike Team.

Tony Martines advises the Strike Team on county-wide needs. Mr. Martines works as a county commissioner for Carbon County where his main focus has been working with county, city, and state leaders to attract new business and further economic development. He brings the knowledge and experience of a community and economic leader working in rural Utah to the Strike Team.

Mike McCandless advises the Strike Team on economic development. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Governor's Rural Partnership Board and was previously the Economic Development Director and County Planner for Emery County. He also served as co-lead for the county in the creation of the Price BLM Resource Management Plan. Mr. McCandless will bring experience in state initiatives and planning to the Strike Team.

Jennifer Robinson administers Strike Team operations, budgeting, personnel, and communications. Dr. Robinson serves as the Associative Director for the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. Her leadership and know-how will be an invaluable asset for this project as it continues to develop. Dr. Robinson brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in government, leadership, and public policy to the Strike Team.

Gary Straquadine advises the Strike Team on higher education. Dr. Straquadine is Vice Provost and Associate Vice President at Utah State University-Eastern. His goal is to advance the academic programs at USU Eastern with a focus on economic and community development. Dr. Straquadine has a background in agricultural extension education. He brings higher education and workforce development experience to the Strike Team.

Rita Vigor advises the Strike Team on economic development. Ms. Vigor is the Economic Development Specialist for Carbon County. She has years of experience in her field and is well known by the community. She works closely with Carbon's Economic Development Council to implement development projects. She brings her expertise in local economic development to the Strike Team.

Kent Wilson advises the Strike Team on economic development. Mr. Wilson currently serves on the Emery County Commission and has extensive experience working on community and economic development in Emery County. Mr. Wilson brings an important local perspective and experience in rural development to the Strike Team.

Endnotes

1. Utah Population Committee, Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute.
2. U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis.
3. U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey, 1.6% margin of error overall and 3.1% for children.
4. The measure used is the Hachman Index. The Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute calculated the index using 2017 employment data from the Utah Department of Workforce Services.
5. U.S. Census Bureau.
6. Utah Association of Realtors.
7. Utah Department of Health.
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, U.S. Prescribing Rate Maps.
9. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
10. There are three coal regions in the U.S. (Appalachia, Interior, and Western). About 56% of total U.S. coal production in the U.S. comes from the Western region, which includes Utah (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2018). Information about declining coal production is available from: "U.S. coal exports on the decline." *UPI Security & Terrorism*, 7 Mar. 2016. *General OneFile*; U.S. Energy Information Administration. 2018. "Coal Explained: Where Our Coal Comes From;" and Harvey, Curtis E. 1986. *Coal in Appalachia: An Economic Analysis*. Lexington: KY: The University Press of Kentucky.
11. U.S. Energy Information Administration. Annual Coal Report, 1994-2016; U.S. Energy Information Administration. Quarterly Coal Report Q4 2017.
12. Bowen, Eric, Christiadi, John Deskins, and Brian Elgo, 2018. An Overview of the Coal Economy in Appalachia. Commissioned by the Appalachian Regional Commission. Available at: https://www.arc.gov/assets/research_reports/CIE1-OverviewofCoalEconomyinAppalachia.pdf.
13. Kent, Cal. 2016. "The Cruel Coal Facts: The Impact on West Virginia Counties from the Collapse of the Coal Economy." Huntington, WV: Marshall University Center for Business and Economic Research. Available at: http://www.marshall.edu/cber/docs/2016-09-Cruel_Coal.pdf.
14. Ibid.; Simeone, Christina, Theodora Okiro, and Deshaun Bennett. 2018. Reimagining Pennsylvania's Coal Communities. Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/proceedingsreports/Reimagining%20Pennsylvanias%20Coal%20Communities_0.pdf.
15. Ezzell, Tim, Dayton Lambert, Eric Ogle. February 2012. Strategies for Economic Improvement in Appalachia's Distressed Counties. Knoxville TN: University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Available at: https://www.arc.gov/assets/research_reports/strategiesforeconomicimprovementinappalachiasdistressedruralcounties21.pdf.
16. Ezzell, Tim, Dayton Lambert, Eric Ogle. February 2012. Strategies for Economic Improvement in Appalachia's Distressed Counties. Knoxville TN: University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Available at: https://www.arc.gov/assets/research_reports/strategiesforeconomicimprovementinappalachiasdistressedruralcounties21.pdf; Simeone, Christina, Theodora Okiro, and Deshaun Bennett. 2018. Reimagining Pennsylvania's Coal Communities. Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/proceedingsreports/Reimagining%20Pennsylvanias%20Coal%20Communities_0.pdf.
17. Ibid
18. Simeone, Christina, Theodora Okiro, and Deshaun Bennett. 2018. Reimagining Pennsylvania's Coal Communities. Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/proceedingsreports/Reimagining%20Pennsylvanias%20Coal%20Communities_0.pdf.
19. Simeone, Christina, Theodora Okiro, and Deshaun Bennett. 2018. Reimagining Pennsylvania's Coal Communities. Kleinman Center for Energy Policy at the University of Pennsylvania. Available at: https://kleinmanenergy.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/proceedingsreports/Reimagining%20Pennsylvanias%20Coal%20Communities_0.pdf. Quote is on page 176.
20. "Carbon County, Utah: Economic Development Strategic Plan," 2018, and "Emery County: Strengths, Opportunities, Goals," 2018.
21. "Economic Development in Carbon and Emery County," Don E. Albrecht, Western Rural Development Center, August 2, 2018.
22. "Carbon County, Utah: Destination Development Plan 2030," Coraggio Group, Destination Development Planning Team.

INFORMED DECISIONS™

Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute | 411 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111 | 801-585-5618 | gardner.utah.edu

