

What in the world are we in for?

FACTS, FEAR & THE FUTURE

Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations
Lynnise Roehrich-Patrick, Executive Director

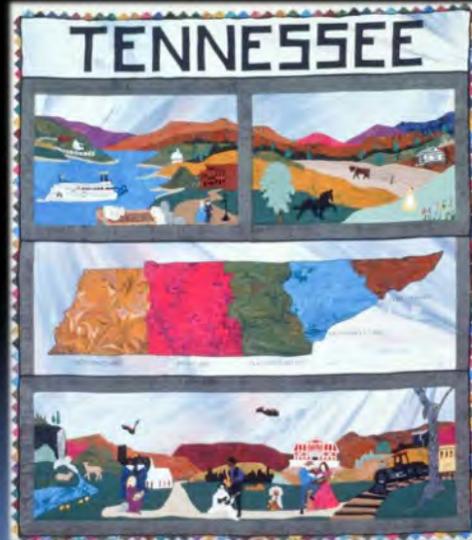


Four years ago, the commission, TACIR, called together a group of forward-thinking men and women. Most had public policy experience. All cared deeply about Tennessee's future.

This group spent weeks deciding what our biggest challenges were, then each wrote an opinion piece on the issue of their choosing. They're all available on our website (http://www.tn.gov/tacir/Special%20html%20Reports/forum_on_future.html).

Now we're working on a new publication, talking further about these issues, highlighting the need to work together to solve our common problems.

Tennessee has many strengths.



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Tennessee has many strengths.



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Its location makes it a natural transportation hub.

Tennessee has many strengths.



Its beautiful landscapes and varied topography make it a natural tourist destination.

Tennessee has many strengths.



- Tennesseans, with their “Volunteer spirit,”
 - have built top-ranked universities and research facilities,



- have created and fostered industry-leading businesses,

Tennessee has many strengths.



- and enjoy a quality of life that continues to attract new businesses and residents.

And yet we face many challenges

- Our educational attainment levels and overall health, though improving, lag those of other states.
- We have sharp contrasts of wealth and poverty.
- Our aging population is putting new pressures on services, ranging from health care to transportation, and shrinking our workforce.
- Our business and industry has become increasingly intertwined with that of other nations, causing changes in the ways we work.
- As in most other states, our roads, bridges, water pipes, and sewer lines, are deteriorating at a time when governments at all levels are strapped for resources.

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And yet we face many challenges.

Our education levels and health are improving but still lag those of other states.

We continue to have sharp contrasts of wealth and poverty

An aging work force, continued globalization, and deteriorating infrastructure . . . all are challenging businesses and policy makers to come up with new ways of doing business even as they offer whole new directions for business.

Where do we go from here?

What does the future hold?



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Change can be a frightening thing!

How do we figure out how to deal with it? What should we expect?

What we need is a common vision for the future to serve as a foundation to develop and work toward common goals and solve shared problems.

How can we do that?



We need a vision . . . a shared vision.

One that grows from our common goals.

One that's focused on our shared problems.

We won't solve them without working together.

So how do we do that?



We Collaborate.

We draw on the expertise of others.

We have regional and local leadership groups that are already focusing on the future of their areas of the state. We need to tap their energy more broadly.

We can partner with our colleges, universities, and technology centers to identify trends, and assess problems and solutions

While we're at it, we can, through these institutions, strengthen students' understanding of public problems, governmental processes, and civic responsibilities.

It's at least a two-fer. Probably more.

We can encourage Tennessee's not-for-profits to collaborate more, both among themselves and with government agencies.

By collaborating instead of striking off on our own, we can achieve economies of scale and extend our reach. And theirs.



We can take much better advantage of the vast array of data we already collect and maintain.

But we need to shift our focus to results and not get as hung up on the way we do things, the way we've always done them.

And we need to use grants, awards, recognition—any incentive—to encourage a move toward a shared vision for Tennessee's future.

And who shall lead them?



"You must be the change you want to see in the world." Mahatma Gandhi

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But we need leadership. We need champions.

Governor Haslam, with his Tennessee Forward initiative, has given us something to build on.

The Governor's Office and the legislature—either or both—could call leaders like you, the chamber of commerce, regional visioning groups, together to begin the effort.

Other states have done it a number of different ways.

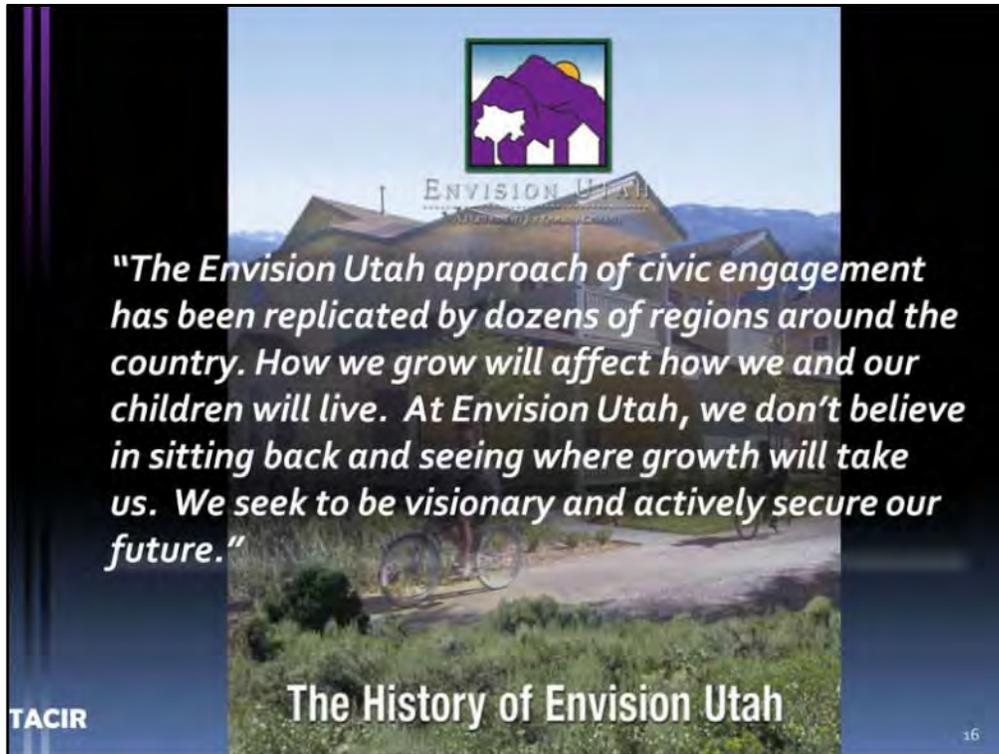


The Council on Virginia's Future evolved from then Governor Mark Warner's Commission on Efficiency and Effectiveness.

The commission was established at the urging of Virginia's business community.

The council that grew out of the commission advises the Governor and the General Assembly on the development and implementation of a Roadmap for Virginia's future.

Members include legislators, business leaders and citizens, and members of the cabinet.



Envision Utah grew out of the Coalition for Utah's Future.

The interesting story here is that it started out trying to dig out of a recession in 1988 so severe that it had lost population and ended up trying to figure out how to handle growth so rapid in the Salt Lake City area that it threatened to fill all of their open space, double their traffic and boost greenhouse gas emissions by 70%.

In 1995, just seven years after the recession that led to formation of the Coalition for Utah's Future, the Governor's Office was projecting that the population of the Greater Wasatch Area, a narrow 120-mile strip where 80 % of the state's residents live, would triple to 5 million people by 2050.

Envision Utah was formed in 1997 to figure out how best to deal with that growth—how to grow without losing the things that were attracting growth.

It is a public-private partnership, funded by a combination of government, foundation, and private sector sources.

After 15 years, it's still in place and actively working.

PAL
PEOPLE AND LAND

Building a New and Prosperous Michigan

Strong, innovative people and beautiful, productive land: these are Michigan's core strengths. What will it take for Michigan to succeed in the Global Economy?

"Successful regions in Michigan have organized themselves around one objective—to plan for the kind of growth that would make them good places to live, work, and play. Working together with Michigan's universities, the Michigan State University Land Policy Institute, and Public Sector Consultants Inc., PAL is providing technical assistance and funding planning initiatives in regions that have demonstrated the leadership to make change."

An Overview and List of Initiatives. Download or Stream a recording of this webinar.

Michigan Must Stop Hoping for Auto Growth. That's Not Working (Detroit Free Press 3/14/10)

PAI Task Force Presentation

2011
MICHIGAN
LANDPROSPERITY
SUMMIT
APRIL 8, 2011

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Michigan People and Land is not still around, but some of its functions have been absorbed by Michigan State's Land and Policy Institute and state agencies.

PAL, as it was called, was started and funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to promote local, regional, and multisector consensus building around issues of growth and development. It grew out of the Foundation's interest in preserving Michigan's rural and agricultural heritage. At the time, land in Michigan was being consumed at six times the rate of population growth.

Although the foundation no longer funds PAL, the governor and state agencies are attempting to carry on it's goals.

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Center for Colorado's Economic Future

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SUPERIOR RESEARCH. DISTINCTIVE IMPACT.

The Center for Colorado's Economic Future provides nonpartisan information and analysis of issues impacting the economic future of Colorado. The goal of our research is to help Colorado's citizens and leaders make decisions that strengthen the state's economy and quality of life.

CCEF in the News

Denver Post editorial:
 "...IT'S HIGH TIME FOR COLORADO TO START A CONVERSATION ABOUT WHAT WE EXPECT FROM GOVERNMENT AND HOW MUCH IT WILL COST..."

CU Connections:
 "REPORT: WITHOUT STRUCTURAL CHANGES, STATE'S REVENUE FORECAST IS BLEAK"

More:
 IMPACT AND OUTREACH

Fund Unbalanced by Billions of Dollars in FY 2024-25

Last year, a two-part study by the Center for Colorado's Economic Future concluded that even with a healthy economic recovery state government General Fund expenditures will exceed revenues by \$3.5 billion in FY 2024-25 because the growth rates of Medicaid and K-12 education spending will far exceed the growth rates of sales and income tax collections.

Without policy changes, the state's obligation to pay for these programs plus the state corrections system will inevitably crowd out funding for higher education, courts and other General Fund programs.

An updated forecast shows:

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Studies and Reports

The Center for Colorado's Economic Future is only five years old. It was created at the recommendation of its predecessor group, the Colorado Economic Futures Panel, formed by the University of Denver.

The panel's mission was to examine the fiscal health of Colorado's state and local governments and their ability to sustain fundamental public investments to support Colorado's long-term economic vitality given Colorado's adoption of term limits and various tax referenda.

The Center that grew out of the panel is funded by the University of Denver and several foundations.



And now here we are, trying to deal with the aftermath of the Great Recession, to meet the needs of our communities as we continue to struggle with slow-growing—and in some cases, declining—tax bases.

We could use a common vision, a way to work together toward common goals and to solve shared problems.

We could work together in any number of ways.

But we need community support—widespread support and a sense that we're all in this together.

What stands in the way of that?

How many of you have or are in the process of developing comprehensive land use plans?

How many of you have or are in the process of adopting or modifying a zoning ordinance?

How many of you are doing this in order to help implement a United Nation's agenda?

None of you? I don't see any hands? How can that be?

Why do people think that?



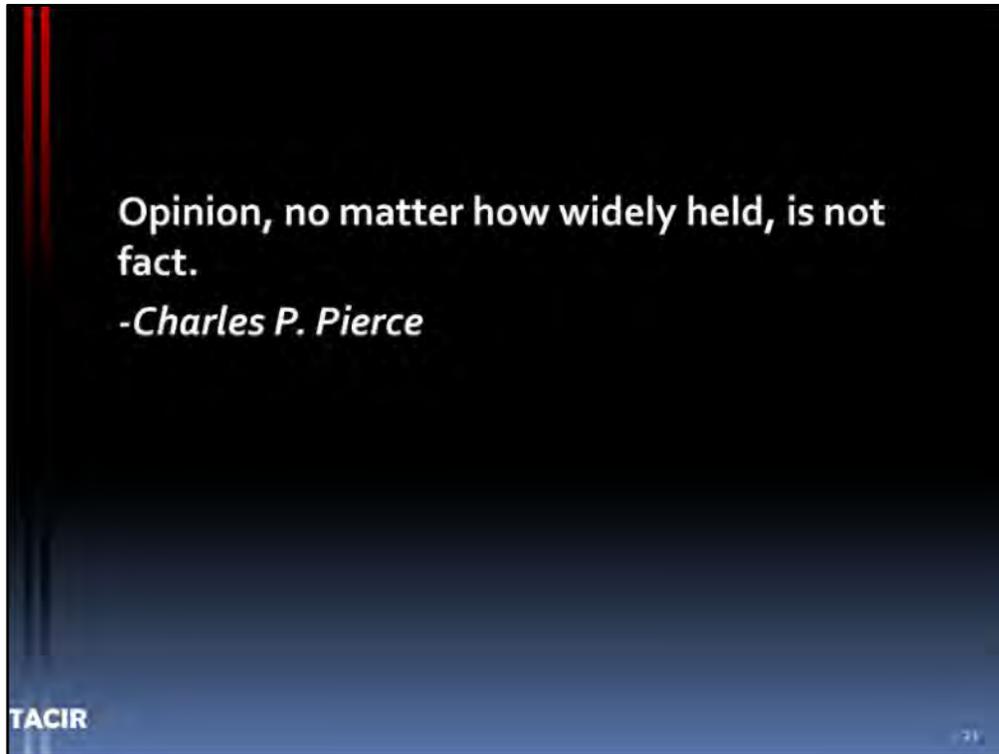
Never underestimate the power of fear to motivate.

It's the first tenet of marketing. Afraid of bad breath? Germs? Being out of fashion? Fear sells.

These are difficult times. Things are changing rapidly and seemingly, in many ways, not for the better.

People fear change. And fear of change makes us vulnerable.

If I think I don't like something, and something I don't like seems to explain it, I'm going to believe that.



Unfortunately, there's little we can do to change that.

We may think explanations will fix it, but it's rare that they will work. Why?

Greater scientific literacy and numeracy were associated with greater *cultural polarization*:

Respondents predisposed by their values to dismiss climate change evidence became more dismissive, and those predisposed by their values to credit such evidence more concerned, as science literacy and numeracy increased.

The Cultural Cognition Project
at Yale Law School
<http://www.culturalcognition.net/>

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There is evidence to support the notion that we back into what we believe based on what we already think. We believe facts support what we already believe.

Don't believe it? Think it's lack of information that causes us to believe things that aren't true?

A recent study shows that the more we know, the more firmly we hold the beliefs we already have.

Take climate change, for example.

Both people who believe it's coming and people who convinced it's a myth adhere more strongly to their beliefs as scientific literacy and numeracy increase.

Facts are less likely to change their minds than they are to change the minds of less knowledgeable people.

Just the facts ain't enough, ma'am

FACTS DON'T WIN.
Ideas are more powerful than facts, especially ideas that conform to your world view.

~ Wilson da Silva
<http://www.cosmosmagazine.com/blog/5808/just-facts-aint-enough-maam>



Simply presenting people with evidence does not alter beliefs, especially those that are deeply held.

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Think about that for a moment.

People who don't like what you're doing are not necessarily the least well informed. They may, in fact, be the most well educated.

Ideas sell better than facts.

Evidence does not trump beliefs.

So what do we do? How do we get where we believe we need to go? Do what we believe is best for our communities?

Listen

Educating people about divisive issues never works. And it's not because people are stupid or don't have enough information. "The problem isn't the audience, the problem is us. We have unrealistic expectations." Simply presenting facts does not alter beliefs.

[Arthur Lupia](#), professor of political science at the University of Michigan

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We respect everyone's beliefs. Value everyone's concerns.

And listen to them.

We listen to them and involve them in what we're trying to do as a community.



Learn what they believe, what they think.

Find out what interests and concerns them.

Understand their sensitivities. What do they value? What do they fear?

Acknowledge the tensions. Find what's driving them.

Find out what their expectations are. Learn what their positive expectations are.

Can you meet their needs?

Americans are individualistic. That's one of our core ideals. We fundamentally believe that people should be left alone to do as they wish unless there is a darned good reason to do otherwise.

As we move toward the future.

As we try to find common ground and a common vision for our communities, our counties, our regions, and our state.

We must listen to people. Really listen. Respect them. And do our best to meet their needs.

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