

**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Wednesday, May 17, 2000 - 9:00 a.m. - 405 State Capitol

Members Present:

Sen. Peter C. Knudson,
Senate Chair
Rep. Marda Dillree,
House Chair
Sen. R. Mont Evans
Sen. Karen Hale
Sen. Eddie "Ed" P. Mayne
Rep. Gerry A. Adair
Rep. Don E. Bush
Rep. Carl W. Duckworth
Rep. Kory M. Holdaway
Rep. Bryan D. Holladay
Rep. Dennis H. Iverson
Rep. Brad King
Rep. Joseph G. Murray
Rep. Lowell A. Nelson
Rep. Richard M. Siddoway

Members Absent:

Sen R. Lane Beattie

Members Excused:

Rep. Karen W. Morgan

Staff Present:

Mr. Benjamin N. Christensen,
Research Analyst
Mr. Dee S Larsen,
Associate General Counsel
Ms. Junie G. Anderson,
Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present and a copy of materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel.

1. Committee Business - Chair Dillree called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

MOTION: Rep. Bush moved to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2000 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Mayne and Rep. Holladay were absent for the vote.

2. I-15 Reconstruction and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Update - Mr. John Bourne, Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), distributed a handout titled "I-15 Reconstruction Project Update" and discussed the attached graphics that included a progress report of the expended budget, the corridor status, and the contract value with change orders.

Rep. Adair suggested that UDOT report to the committee on the strength and quality of the concrete used and specific problems that have occurred.

Chair Dillree informed committee members that there will be tours of the I-15 Reconstruction Project on June 8 and June 21.

Mr. John Njord, UDOT, distributed a handout titled "Total Number of Federal & State Projects Advertised." He said the STIP projects are on target.

Mr. Njord noted that any project within Utah County that increases capacity on a regionally-significant road will be delayed if it has not been cleared for construction by August 2000. In Salt Lake County, the deadline is January 2001. He said this is because the Statewide Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality conformity in these counties will lapse and the transportation plan must conform with the air quality plan. Mr. Njord expressed the importance of the Legacy Highway and having alternate routes and explained that because the Legacy Highway comes into Salt Lake County, it is subject to conformity plans.

Ms. Dianne Nielson, Department of Environmental Quality (DEC), addressed the issue of conformity of the air quality plan with the transportation plan. She said that the problem of not meeting conformity in Utah and Salt Lake Counties is that DEQ is unable to document that the increases in vehicle miles traveled and pollution related to mobile sources would enable them to still maintain air quality.

Mr. Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality (DAQ), said the division is in the process of developing the air quality plan. He also said that financial support was received from the Legislature to accelerate the revision process. Mr. Sprott noted that, to date, the air quality plan is on schedule and the budget is on target. He indicated that emissions and computer model problems may delay some projects for 9 to 18 months. He said an approved air quality plan is expected by early 2002 and perhaps interim submittals may allow projects to proceed earlier.

Mr. Elden Bingham, UDOT, said federal guidelines require transportation plans to be projected out 20 years, while air quality plans are only projected out 6-7 years. The difference in these periods causes a problem with meeting conformity.

Chair Dillree explained the message of the handout that was distributed by the Department of Public Safety titled "Buckle Up Utah."

3. Access Management Program - Mr. Njord spoke about the difficulties in providing transportation facilities. He said that DAQ's inability to fund large projects and the environmental process that is required of UDOT to complete projects are some of the stumbling blocks in providing services that the public demands. He stressed the importance of utilizing the capacity and the abilities of existing highway facilities. He noted that access management is one of the best tools available to his department to use existing facilities effectively.

Mr. Dan Julio, UDOT, distributed a handout titled "Access Management Study - Benefits of Access Management" and discussed the process of access management and its benefits. He explained that UDOT had hired a consultant to help UDOT, cities, and counties better use access management principles. He also discussed project timelines.

Mr. Bob Fox, UDOT, discussed the purchase of access and how the value of such access is determined.

4. Motor Vehicle Impound and Release Issues - Mr. Christensen discussed a document titled "Impound and Release of Vehicles for DUI Offense" that was mailed to committee members prior to the meeting. He distributed a handout titled "Vehicle Impound Report" and explained its purpose. He also distributed a handout titled "Vehicle Impound and Release" and explained the process of vehicle impound, the release of an impounded vehicle, and potential improvement measures in the process.

Mr. Barry Conover, Utah State Tax Commission, discussed impound releases and fee collection. He said the biggest challenge is getting a timely Vehicle Impound Report from law enforcement departments which makes it difficult in tracking the location of the vehicle. He suggested that the courts could be assigned the task of fee collection.

Ms. Kathleen Howell, Cache County Assessor, discussed how county assessors are impacted by the current process. She said the high fee for releasing the impounded vehicle, along with the extra time it takes to release an impounded vehicle, has caused problems and potential danger for county employees and innocent bystanders because many times it provokes anger in the person paying the fees and the customers standing in line. She suggested that law enforcement agencies could take over fee collection and release of impounded vehicles.

Colonel Richard Greenwood, Department of Public Safety, Utah Highway Patrol, suggested that the law enforcement officer, the tow truck driver, and the person responsible for the impound could make some improvements to help with the information dissemination. He recommended that a central location for information of impounded vehicles be assigned.

Sheriff Mike Lacy, San Juan County Sheriff, discussed the reporting process in his county.

Mr. Kent Bishop, Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, discussed agency regulation and rules for the issues. He distributed an article from the Deseret News titled "Junk Cars A Growing Problem in Utah." He said his office plans to bring proposed changes in current legislation before the committee that would be supported by the Utah Advisory Council on Intergovernmental Relations (UACIR), local governments, law enforcement, and state agencies.

Mr. Craig Allred, Department of Public Safety, said it is common that a DUI will turn into a stolen vehicle report because the driver will abandon a vehicle and report it as stolen in order to avoid a DUI charge.

Mr. Dave Woodbury, Utah Professional Towing Association, addressed the impact of impounded vehicles on towing companies/impound lot owners. He said the current law needs improvement.

5. Other Committee Business - Three maps of the Inter-Regional Corridor Alternatives Analysis titled "2020 Transportation Plans," "Existing & Committed Transportation Plans," and Rail Lines - Regional Commuter Rail" were also distributed from UTA.

6. Adjourn -

MOTION: Rep. Adair moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 11:48 a.m. Sen. Mayne, Rep. Duckworth, and Rep. Holladay were absent for the vote.