

TRANSPORTATION PROJECT OVERVIEW



This handout is your guide through the transportation project process. It covers the following topics:

- ❖ Maintaining and Promoting Access and Traffic Flow
- ❖ Who Will Be in Contact with You During a Project
- ❖ The Life Cycle of a Road, Getting Involved, and Staying Informed
- ❖ Realities of Roadway Construction
- ❖ Maintaining a Positive Outlook

Whichever type of project you experience, this guide will give you a better understanding of how to best prepare for transportation renovations.

MAINTAINING AND PROMOTING ACCESS AND TRAFFIC FLOW

Maintaining and promoting access and traffic flow to your business is key to ensuring that your customer flow continues during construction. There are several ways you can accomplish this, including:

- ❖ Getting involved early in a transportation project (see next page). **The earlier your concerns are voiced during a project, the better prepared the project team will be to respond to them.** Early involvement also allows for government and community groups to work together to develop solutions that ease traffic and access flow before construction starts.
- ❖ **As a result of businesses voicing concerns early, design plans can often make construction specifications that provide incentives to contractors who can resolve these concerns.** For example, a contractor may receive incentives for providing access signs to businesses that have construction at their store front.
- ❖ **Get creative!** Consider hosting promotional events with a construction theme, providing coupons, or posting detour directions that encourage your patrons to continue to visit your business during construction. Make sure to **start a database of your customers prior to construction to ensure that they receive information on your events or specials.**
- ❖ **Partner with other local businesses** to print joint advertisements in local papers or host block party sale events.
- ❖ During construction, **communicate access, parking, or traffic flow issues with the appropriate project staff,** usually the project PI manager (see below), so that the issues can be resolved as quickly as possible.

WHO WILL BE IN CONTACT WITH YOU

Transportation projects require a team of experts in a variety of fields. During any given phase of a UDOT project, you may come in contact with one or more of the following individuals:

Public Involvement/Information (PI) Manager: UDOT projects with significant community impacts are assigned a PI Manager to handle stakeholder communications, disseminate project information, and host and/or facilitate public meetings and committee groups. **These individuals are most often your primary point-of-contact when a project is underway.**

Public Involvement Coordinator (PIC): Every UDOT Region has a PIC to oversee and coordinate public involvement activities. If a PI Manager is not assigned to a project, PIC's are your next best source to obtain project information.

UDOT Project Manager: The role of the UDOT Project Manager is to oversee all project team member activities and ensure that the project is completed with the utmost quality, on-schedule, and on-budget. Project Managers usually attend public meetings and open houses and often participate in project-specific committee groups.

UDOT Resident Engineer: The UDOT Resident Engineer's main role is to oversee the construction of projects. They are responsible for ensuring that the contractor is adhering to plans, specifications, and quality workmanship. Like Project Managers, Resident Engineers often attend and participate in public meetings regarding the project.

Environmental Lead: During a project's environmental study phase, much public input is sought regarding the physical, social, and economic environment. Environmental Leads sometimes host public meetings and conduct surveys to obtain this vital project information.

Right-of-Way Agent: Some projects require the acquisition of land to sustain adequate right-of-way for the planned improvements. Right-of-Way Agents are in charge of contacting and meeting with the owners of such properties to negotiate settlement agreements and prepare acquisition documents.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF A ROAD

Transportation projects consist of key phases with different objectives. It is important to familiarize yourself with each of these phases to know when and how you can get involved. As your partner for the road ahead, UDOT is committed to keeping you informed about the project impacts that are most important to you. The examples below are just some of the most common information gathering and dissemination forums UDOT utilizes. These can vary from project to project, but you can be sure that whatever project concerns you, there is a way for you to get involved.

Project Phase	Description	Getting Involved
 Project Identification / Corridor Inventory	The Statewide Transportation Planning process uses data collected from a series of management systems, corridor inventories, and other special programs, combined with public input, to develop strategies and projects that improve the transportation system. Corridor inventories compile information on current roadway conditions, right-of-way, pavement width, current and predicted traffic volumes, accident reports, and other significant information concerning the roadway.	During the project identification / corridor inventory process, you have opportunities to provide feedback about a project area and play a part in determining what the needs are. Although this phase takes place years before construction, this is one of the most effective times to get involved. Comments taken during this period help define the scope of future improvements and are documented and passed on to future project phases. The most common forums for getting involved include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Public Meetings Held Annually throughout the State to Discuss the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan ❖ Monthly Transportation Commission Meetings, which are Open to the Public (for meeting times and locations, visit www.udot.utah.gov)
 Funding Acquisition	Once a project is approved, funding must be acquired to design and construct it. The funding process is complex and time consuming, as there are numerous projects competing for the same available funding. Several entities, including federal, state, and local governments, work towards prioritizing projects according to the needs identified in the corridor inventory in order to allocate funds where they are most needed.	Once project funding has been allocated, the project is added to the UDOT Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) listing. Updated annually, this list covers planned transportation improvements for the next five years and is a great resource for identifying upcoming projects. To view the latest STIP, visit www.udot.utah.gov . Although there is not a project team to communicate with in regards to a specific project during this phase, you can still get involved by letting your local government representatives know how important a particular project is to your community. Other ways to stay informed about funding issues and upcoming projects are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Local Newspapers and City Newsletters ❖ Television and Radio News Casts
 Environmental Study	Most environmental studies entail assessing impacts and determining whether those impacts are in compliance with environmental laws and regulations. These laws and regulations are in place to protect cultural and historical resources; rare, threatened, and endangered species; and environmental justice requirements. They also regulate water, air, noise, and hazardous material impacts resulting from the proposed improvements. Some environmental studies result in a document that presents a preferred alternative option for transportation improvements. The document is then submitted to the appropriate agency for approval.	The environmental phase of any project is an ideal time for getting involved. Environmental studies are based on fact-finding activities, one of the most important of which is seeking public feedback. You have several milestone opportunities to get involved throughout an environmental study. These milestones usually entail 1) Providing information to be included in the project Purpose and Need, 2) Reviewing and giving feedback on proposed alternatives, and 3) Reviewing and giving feedback on the preferred alternative – what will ultimately be designed. The most common forums for getting involved include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Public Hearings/Open Houses ❖ Comment Forms ❖ Calls/Emails/Letters to the Public Involvement Team ❖ Project Committee Group(s) (if available) ❖ Environmental Document Reviews (if warranted) ❖ Surveys
 Design	A project's design phase can include a myriad of elements depending on the project's scope. Some projects only entail minor roadway and signal improvements, while others require new interchanges and complex structures. Once a project's design is finalized, it is advertised for a contractor's bid.	During the design phase, the general project scope is already determined; therefore, only those comments related to minor design issues are considered. These often include location of driveways, median placements, and landscaping and aesthetic plans. Use this time to familiarize yourself with the project scope and general construction schedule so that you can prepare your business accordingly. The most common ways to provide feedback during this phase include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Public Meetings ❖ Individual Meetings with the Project Engineers ❖ Comment Forms ❖ Calls/Emails/Letters to the Public Involvement Team
 Construction	Once a contractor is selected, coordination takes place for construction to begin. Every project is different so construction activities vary greatly from one project to the next. However, construction activities usually include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Acquiring Right-of-Way ❖ Constructing/Repairing Structures ❖ Excavating the Existing Roadway ❖ Paving the Roadway ❖ Conducting Utility Work ❖ Landscaping 	When a project is in the construction phase, its design plans are finalized based on input provided during previous phases. You will be informed about construction activities and impacts, and you can inform the project team about construction-related issues that need to be resolved. The most common ways to get involved in this phase include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ground Breaking and Ribbon Cutting Events ❖ Calls and Emails to the Public Involvement Team ❖ Completing Pre- Mid- and Post-Construction Surveys ❖ One-on-One Meetings with Project Team Members ❖ Project Committee Group(s) (if available) ❖ Signing Up for Construction Email Updates
 Maintenance	Proper maintenance activities can prolong the life of a roadway by many years. These operations include seal coating, chip sealing, crack repairs, and rotomills and overlays (re-paving).	Maintenance operations generally cause only short-term impacts and often times take place at off-peak traffic hours. The following resources may be available to help you prepare for maintenance activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Roadside Signs with Traffic Impact Information ❖ Public Involvement Coordinator (PIC) Contact for Each UDOT Regional Office ❖ Construction Email Updates ❖ Project Briefs (see <i>Maintaining & Promoting Your Business</i>)

STAYING INFORMED

Now that you know all the different ways to get involved, you may be wondering how you will be informed of these opportunities on future projects. Below is a list of the most common outreach methods used to notify you about project information and involvement opportunities*:

- ❖ Project web sites (if it is a UDOT project, you can find the link at www.udot.utah.gov)
- ❖ Public involvement professionals that are there to listen, document, and ensure that your concerns are relayed to the appropriate channels. These individuals are also in charge of keeping you informed about project activities.
- ❖ Project email updates (if you request to receive them)
- ❖ Project hotlines with pre-recorded project information, including upcoming construction activities and a voice message system for you to provide feedback
- ❖ Highway Advisory Radio stations (frequencies are posted near project areas)
- ❖ Advertisements in local papers
- ❖ Mailers (postcards, flyers, brochures, or newsletters)
- ❖ Door-to-door visits
- ❖ Variable message or electronic signs that advise drivers of upcoming construction, traffic conditions, and detour routes
- ❖ CommuterLink (web-based up-to-the-minute information and camera shots of traffic conditions at www.commuterlink.utah.gov)
- ❖ News media and radio advertisements

***NON-UDOT PROJECTS**

Not all projects on UDOT roads are UDOT construction or maintenance projects. Some are permit projects being conducted by private companies, other public agencies, or utility companies. These parties are responsible for notifying you of construction impacts to your business.

PAVEMENT MAINTENANCE

Often, the need for roadway maintenance is not apparent on the roadway surface. Problems may be lurking under the surface that can significantly impact the life of the pavement. Generally, UDOT plans to resurface its asphalt roadways every seven years. Maintenance of concrete surfaces takes place every 15 years.

REALITIES OF ROADWAY CONSTRUCTION

Roadway construction is necessary to ensure that transportation facilities keep up with existing and future traffic capacity, maintain safety, and meet community needs. It is important for business owners to have a clear idea of what to expect during construction in order to be ready when it begins.

Much of this information is project-specific; therefore, attending public project meetings and maintaining contact with the project team are always the best ways to stay informed. However, there are common elements to all roadway construction projects that you can familiarize yourself with. Below is an overview of these types of construction activities, their impacts, and possible mitigation efforts.

Impact	Description	Mitigation Effort
Dust	Dust in the project area can increase as a result of increased construction traffic and windy and/or dry weather conditions.	Watering is adjusted throughout a project in order to reduce airborne dust levels and minimize air quality impacts.
Noise & Vibration	Construction activities may result in increased noise and vibration during construction hours. The noise and vibration impacts are temporary, but may be substantial for short intervals.	Construction noise and vibration cannot exceed local noise ordinances or UDOT contract specifications. Mitigation options are limited to the project scope, location, and schedule.
Traffic Delays	Traffic delays are often caused by lane restrictions, which are necessary in order to provide enough clearance for construction crews and allow the construction of sections of the roadway.	Mitigation efforts can include maintaining additional lanes during peak traffic hours, announcing any anticipated nighttime/daytime closures on electronic message signs near the project area, and disseminating construction information with significant traffic impacts via email updates. All mitigation efforts are subject to the project scope, location, and schedule.
Modified Access to Properties	Property accesses may need to be temporarily restricted in order to conduct roadway reconstruction activities.	UDOT is committed to working with all affected property owners along the project corridor to best maintain driveway and walkway access during construction. Mitigation efforts can be on either a project-wide or individual basis.
Brief Utility Interruptions	Brief utility interruptions (i.e. gas, phone, power, etc.) may occur during a project's utility work phase. Utility work is most often conducted by utility companies independent of UDOT or the contractor.	Utility companies should inform you of any anticipated utility interruptions, unless it is an emergency situation. UDOT and the project team will make every effort to minimize utility interruptions; however, the complex coordination among all involved utilities may cause some impacts to the project schedule. Any unscheduled utility interruptions should be reported to the responsible utility company or a member of the project team.

MAINTAINING A POSITIVE OUTLOOK

As a business owner, you realize the importance of reflecting a positive outlook about your services and products. Your positive attitude goes a long way towards attracting customers and keeping them coming back.



Whether it entails full reconstruction or maintenance activities, it is likely that at some point in time you and your customers will face road construction near your business. The best way to cope with these circumstances, while maintaining a strong customer base, is to have a proactive plan that helps you maintain a positive outlook for your business. It is also important for you and UDOT to communicate with each other and brainstorm ideas that will give your business the best chance to thrive and prosper. The *Maintaining and Promoting Your Business* section of this guide offers just a few of the numerous possibilities to maintain a strong customer base during construction.