Purpose
To establish the authority for the development of the Utah Department of Transportation (Department) Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and to outline the policies and procedures involved in this process.

Policy
The Utah Transportation Commission (UTC) is the approving authority for all construction programs and projects. The Department will prepare and annually update the program for construction projects to be considered and approved by the UTC. The program will reflect a six-year list of projects and will follow the statements below. The first four years are financially constrained according to funds available for that fiscal year. The last two years are projects in concept development.

The STIP Development Process will be followed in developing the STIP.

Selecting Projects
The following statements apply when selecting projects:

1. Utah’s Unified Transportation Plan

The UTC’s project selection criteria reflect the goals of the Unified Transportation Plan (UTP). The strategic goals for Utah’s transportation system as developed in the long range plan include:

   a. Preserve Infrastructure
   b. Optimize Mobility
   c. Zero Fatalities
   d. Strengthen the Economy

2. Open, Fair, Criteria-Driven Process

It is UTC policy to have a fair, open, and equitable selection process based on criteria that determine which projects contribute most to state, regional, and local transportation and economic development goals. The UTC process intends to use decision support systems based on criteria (data) to help maximize and prioritize resources using quantifiable measures.
3. **System Preservation First – “Preserve Infrastructure”**

Well planned and executed maintenance and preservation activities will extend the highway system’s life by many years at a far lower cost than replacing it. Rehabilitation, preservation, maintenance, and operations have the greatest weight in allocating funds among Department programs. Preservation and management of the existing system should be accomplished by funding system preservation needs first and providing funds for new construction only after the preservation needs have been met. The basic transportation system needs are the amount of funding determined by the Asset Management System needed to meet the condition targets or goals established by the Department.

4. **System Efficiency Projects – “Optimize Mobility”**

The Department will preserve and optimize the capacity of the existing highway infrastructure before increasing capacity by adding new lanes. The first reaction to present and future capacity issues are alternatives to increasing capacity by adding new lanes.

With the rate of population growth projected to continue, it is clear that the Department needs to continue to add new routes, widen existing corridors, construct new interchanges, and perform other work to increase capacity. Because projected revenues are not expected to meet all the identified capacity needs, the Department will continue to identify funding to address this growing need.

“Optimizing Mobility” is addressed primarily through four strategies:

a. Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)

b. Access Management

c. Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

d. Capacity Projects

5. **Safety Criterion – “Zero Fatalities”**

Most construction projects improve safety by correcting deficiencies. A safety index targets specific highway locations for safety improvements. A project’s safety index may be used as a selection criterion in each prioritization process as appropriate. This criterion ensures safety is a primary consideration in the development and design of Department projects because of the importance of identifying safety deficiencies.
6. **Strengthen the Economy**

Utah’s economy is strengthened by meeting the other three strategic goals. This is achieved by providing a system for the movement of people, goods and services that is safe, reliable and efficient.

7. **Non-UDOT Participation**

It is the policy to encourage local governments to leverage the state’s transportation capital by contributing additional funds for projects by providing local matching dollars or participating through other methods such as providing right-of-way. This policy allows Utah to increase its infrastructure investment, gives local project proponents additional means to speed delivery of projects which otherwise would not be possible, and encourages those who benefit most from projects to participate in their construction. Refer to Administrative Rule on Partnering – R926-8 for process for approving or denying proposals.

8. **Interchange Participation**

The UTC will build no new interchanges for economic development purposes on existing routes without a minimum of a 50 percent contribution of the cost of the interchange from private, local, or other non-UDOT funds. This policy does not apply to intersections or interchanges that are planned to be upgraded because of safety or capacity justification. Refer to Administrative Rule R940-6-6.

9. **The UTC will determine all STIP projects**

It is explicit UTC policy that projects can be selected regardless of their score, ranking, cost, or functional class. The reason is that no ranking system can completely measure all project attributes. The UTC can select the project for funding if other factors arise that the UTC finds important to a project. Such circumstances will happen most frequently with projects that are non traditional.

**Funding Projects**

The following statements apply when funding projects:

1. **Prioritize first then fund**

All projects will be ranked or prioritized using quantifiable measures first then funding will be applied using any flexibility allowed to fund the projects in priority order.

2. **The Executive Director and Deputy Director are delegated the authority to:**

   a. Approve projects up to $250,000.
b. Approve increases of up to 25 percent or $500,000 whichever is less for projects previously approved by the UTC, when a major change in standards or project concepts are not involved.

Definitions

**Average Daily Traffic** – The volume of traffic on a road, annualized to a daily average.

**Capacity** – The maximum hourly rate at which vehicles reasonably can be expected to traverse a point or a uniform section of a lane or roadway during a given time period under prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions.

**Economic Development** – May include such things as employment growth, employment retention, retail sales, tourism growth, freight movements, tax base increase, and traveler or user cost savings in relation to construction costs.

**Safety** – An analysis of the current safety conditions of a transportation facility. It includes an analysis of crash rates and crash severity.

**Safety Index** – A value ranging from 1 (low) to 10 (high) that represents the degree of risk to the driver in terms of both crash rate and crash severity.

**System Preservation Plan** – A yearly or semi-yearly publication for asset groups and Regions to use when developing their construction programs. It contains a 10-year optimized preservation program for pavement sections and bridges. It also presents mile segments that should be considered for safety, ITS, and mobility improvements. All these segment concepts line up with each other to help with project timing during project development.

**Transportation Criteria** – The project selection criteria may include the project’s average daily traffic, volume-to-capacity-ratio, transportation growth, and roadway classification. This data is collected by the Department in a uniform and objective manner.

**Transportation Growth** – The projected percentage of average annual increase in ADT.

**Volume to Capacity Ratio** – The ratio of hourly volume of traffic to capacity for a transportation facility (measure of congestion).