

2019 UDOT RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

*** Problem statement deadline is Feb. 6, 2019. Submit statements to UTRAC@utah.gov. ***

Title: Mobility of the Disabled Community

No. (Office Use): 19.05.10

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Select ONE Subject Area Materials/Pavements Maintenance Traffic Mgmt/Safety Structures/Geotech
 Planning Perf Mgmt/Data Analytics Public Transportation Other

1. Describe the problem to be addressed:

Nearly one in five (17.8%) Utah adults is living with a disability. The most common are mobility-related disabilities (9.1%), followed by cognitive disabilities (8.8%), disabilities that impact independent living (4.5%), and vision-related disabilities (2.8%) (www.health.utah.gov). All of these disabilities can impact a person's ability to get around, including access to employment as well as much needed trips to medical appointments or access to other health maintenance opportunities. When appropriate accommodations can be made, the quality of life for those living with disabilities is improved.

The Utah Department of Transportation complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and has several programs geared specifically focused on enhancing mobility for people with disabilities, including paratransit, and enhances pedestrian access programs and transition planning. However, no effort has been made to reach out to the disabled community to inquire as to what their major transportation challenges are, or how UDOT could improve mobility for those with disabilities.

The Utah Disability and Health Program is guided by the Utah Disability Advisory Committee (UDAC) which membership includes people with disabilities and representatives from disability organizations, advocacy groups, and public health organizations. For this research, the project team will work directly with UDAC to administer a multi-dimensional survey of disabled Utahns. The project team will utilize assistance from UDAC to best determine which delivery methods are most appropriate and how to reach out to the largest number of disabled Utahns, particularly those who may struggle with transportation or getting around. The survey will specifically ask about current mobility patterns and barriers to mobility that those with different types of disabilities face. After the survey is administered, the data will be coded and cleaned for analysis and evaluation. Results of this survey will be compiled in a final report for UDOT.

2. Write the project objective (25 words or less):

Survey the disabled community to identify current mobility patterns and barriers to mobility for those with disabilities, and identify recommendations for improvement.

3. Explain why this research is important:

(In response, consider addressing specific UDOT goals, applicability in Utah or other states, etc.)

Nearly one in five Utah adults is disabled making them a significant portion of the population. By determining their specific mobility needs and concerns, and identifying barriers to mobility, more effort can be made to improve the existing transportation system and provide appropriate transportation options affording these individuals improved access to employment, healthcare and daily maintenance tasks. The findings of this research will benefit Planning, Traffic and Safety, Program Development and Traffic Operations divisions as potential improvements can be identified improving ease of use, streamlining mobility, and improving safety.

4. List the major tasks:

1. Meet with the technical advisory committee to refine the scope, timeline, and deliverables of this research

2. Conduct a literature review of existing knowledge relating to travel behavior and transportation issues faced by the disabled. Include review of scholarly publications, government reports, and other appropriate documents.
3. Conduct a preliminary brainstorm session with UDAC leadership to determine potential challenges in administering a survey or gathering data from the target population, as well as methods for survey administration.
4. Create a survey targeting current travel behavior and barriers faced when traveling. Potential pilot test of survey tool with a small group of disabled individuals
5. Administer survey to larger sample of disabled Utahns as identified and directed by the UDAC stakeholders
6. Code and clean data from surveys including digital scan algorithm if needed for paper surveys
7. Conduct and evaluation and analysis of all data. Identify key findings and draft recommendations
8. Prepare a final report, presentation, and recorded webinar summarizing the project

5. List the expected deliverables (reports, manual, specification, design method, training, etc.):

1. Final Report summarizing the process undertaken to collect and analyze the data including analysis and recommendations
2. Paper submitted for presentation to the Transportation Research Board annual meeting as well as other appropriate venues
3. Paper submitted to a journal for publication summarizing the research methods, analysis and findings

**6. Describe how the research results will be implemented:
(In response, consider addressing UDOT leader support, process or standard improvement, etc.)**

UDOT will be able to use the findings of this work to better integrate planning for those with disabilities in their existing framework rather than creating separate programs targeting only a small subset of that population (e.g. the blind or those in wheelchairs).

7. Requested from UDOT: \$40,000 (or UTA for Public Transportation) Other/Matching Funds: \$ Total Cost: \$40,000

8. Outline the proposed schedule, including start and major event dates:

