

# Utah Statewide Rest Area Plan

## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

Prepared For:



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This EXECUTIVE SUMMARY is a separate document that highlights the key recommendations of the study and is intended to embody the essential elements of a future program document.

### PART 1 INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) is “Quality Transportation Today, Better Transportation Tomorrow. We Connect Communities.” Accordingly, UDOT presents this Statewide Rest Area Plan in support of its mission statement and continual efforts to provide a safe and efficient transportation system for the public.

*“Quality Transportation Today,  
Better Transportation Tomorrow.  
We Connect Communities.”  
- Mission of the Utah Department  
of Transportation*

The strength of UDOT depends on the strength of its program. Rest areas, welcome centers and view areas are important elements of that program.

These facilities play an important role in relation to highway safety, primarily as it relates to combating driver fatigue.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration conservatively estimates that 100,000 police-reported crashes each year are the direct result of driver fatigue, resulting in an estimated 1,550 deaths, 71,000 injuries, and \$12.5 billion in monetary losses. It is widely recognized that these statistics understate the extent of these types of crashes due to the difficulty in recognizing and accurately reporting fatigue-related crashes.

In addition to their safety role, these facilities also represent an image related to Utah’s tourists and travelers. According to the State of Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development, approximately 13.7 million non-resident tourists entered Utah via our state highways in 2005.

Lastly, these facilities serve an important role as truck staging areas for the commercial trucking industry. With an increasing emphasis on “just-in-time” delivery practices, commercial truck drivers often utilize rest area facilities outside urbanized areas to await the opening of a warehouse or business to which they are delivering.

This Plan represents a substantial effort to preserve and enhance the existing rest facility system in combination with its supporting processes, programs, and policies.

#### 1.1 Plan Importance and Purpose

*Provide useful and efficient highway rest facilities that produce safe drivers by providing safe and interesting breaks from driving*

This Plan represents a continuance on the part of UDOT to provide useful and efficient highway rest facilities that produce safe drivers. This is accomplished by providing safe and interesting breaks from driving.

A place to park and a restroom constitute the most basic expectations for motorists that stop at

Utah’s highway rest facilities. As new concepts are incorporated into the highway rest facilities they will discover that Utah’s facilities offer much more. Eventually, this necessary stop will be anticipated for more than just the traveler’s basic needs.

*Provide a plan that successfully guides UDOT in establishing future priorities, allocating resources, and developing policies related to rest areas, welcome centers, and view areas for the next twenty years*

**1.2 Plan Goals**

This Plan represents more than an effort to inventory facilities, identify deficiencies, recommend capital improvements, and develop cost estimates.

The primary goal of this effort is to provide a plan that successfully guides UDOT in establishing future priorities, allocating resources, and developing policies related to rest areas, welcome centers, and view areas for the next twenty years.

**1.3 Background and History**

Highway roadside rest areas came into being in 1938 as a part of the Federal Highway Aid Act. Increased attention to and nationwide construction of rest areas came with the passage of the Interstate Highway Act of 1956, establishment of the Highway Trust Fund in 1956, and the Highway Beautification Act of 1965.

**A. Creation of Utah’s Rest Area System**

Rest areas were primarily developed at the same time Utah’s highway system was constructed. The oldest currently operating rest area was constructed in 1965 along State Route 30 at the southern end of Bear Lake. It is by coincidence that the newest rest area, completed in June 2006, is located along US Highway 89 overlooking Bear Lake.



**Bear Lake Rest Area Building**

UDOT’s rest facility system currently includes sixty-three facilities as follows:

- Twenty-four rest areas
- Five welcome centers
- Ten view areas
- Five public/private partnership rest stops
- Six public/public facilities
- Thirteen ports of entry



**New Bear Lake Overlook Rest Area Building**

**Figure 1 Rest Facility System** shows the location, type, and name of each facility.

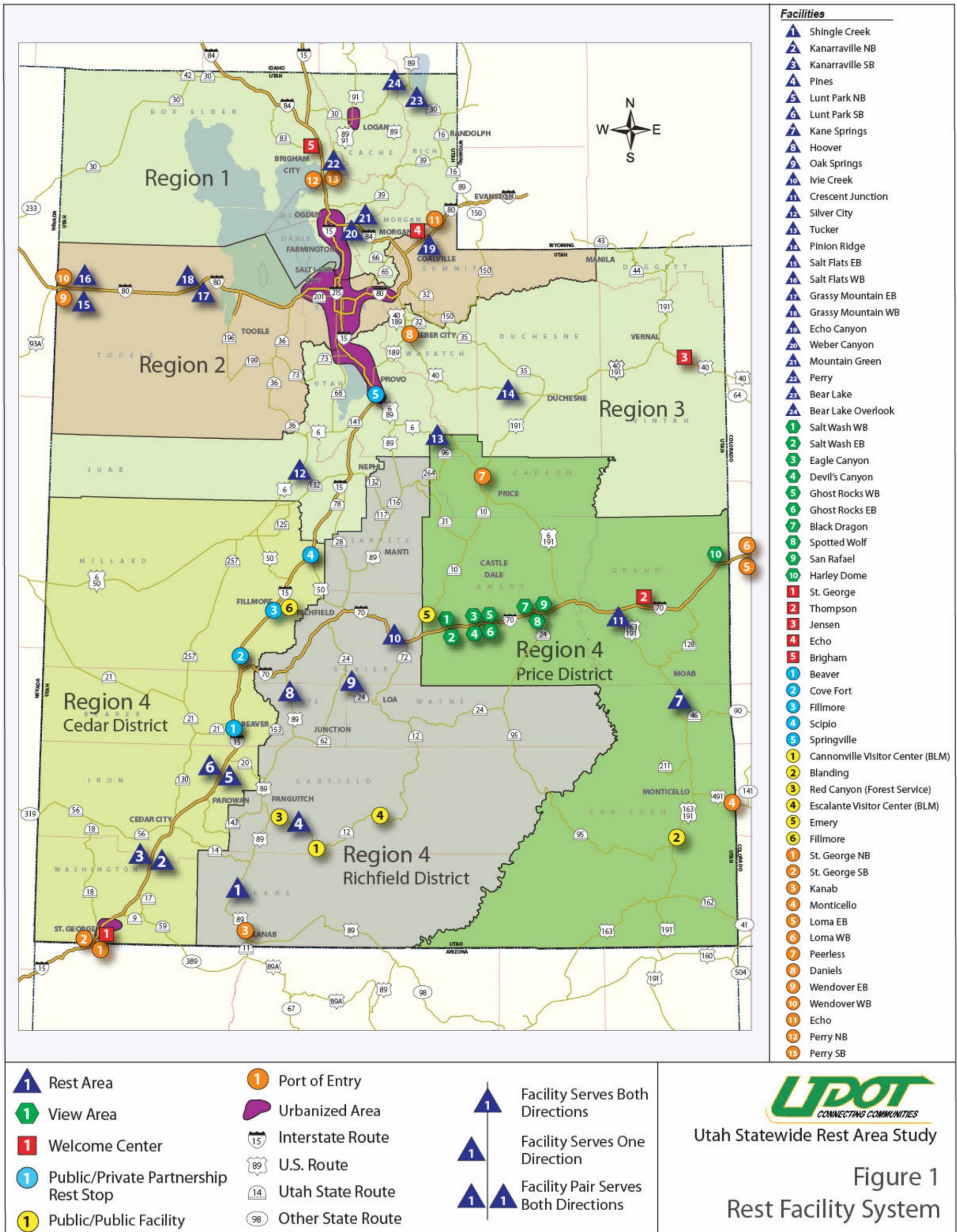
**B. Current Conditions**

Of the thirty-nine rest area, welcome center and view area facilities currently in operation, ten are considered new facilities (less than ten years old). Of the remaining twenty-seven facilities, twenty-four are over thirty years old with half of those being over thirty-five years old.



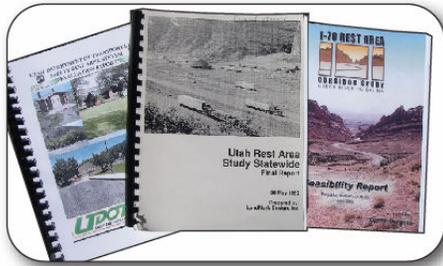
**Kanarrville Rest Area Rest Room**

Although the general condition of these facilities is deteriorating, a statewide maintenance contract helps ensure that the facilities operate in a clean, safe and efficient manner. Periodic rehabilitation and operational concerns are handled on a case-by-case basis as needs arise.



C. Previous Studies

In 1990, UDOT conducted an in-depth study of the State’s existing rest area system. The 1990 study included numerous recommendations related facility services, spacing and location criteria, design and standards, and maintenance. The 1990 study has guided UDOT in the continued development of the State’s rest areas, view areas and welcome centers for the past 16 years.



In 2000, UDOT staff completed an in-depth inventory and assessment of Region 3 and Region 4 facilities.

In 2003, UDOT completed a Rest Area Feasibility Study to evaluate the need for an additional rest area along I-70 and, if necessary, develop a plan to provide the additional rest

area services.

UDOT has completed additional studies that have led to the construction of new facilities, upgrades to existing facilities, and closure of obsolete facilities.

These previous studies served as a key foundational element of this Plan document.

**1.3 Planning Process**

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in their Guide for the Development of Rest Areas on Major Arterials and Freeways, indicates that rest area facilities are integral to highway systems and require a comprehensive, statewide investment-planning process. The goals for this process suggested by AASHTO include:

- Identifying rest area needs
- Determining the impacts generated by these rest facility needs
- Development of solutions to address the identified needs and potential impacts

This planning effort followed this general three-phased approach with initial facility inventory, facility patron survey, and plan development elements.

The plan development element included a substantial literature review effort, interviews with other states, development of a facility ranking and analysis tool, and detailed plan recommendations.

A technical and an advisory committee were formed to assist in the plan development process.

Technical Committee members included:

- Wayne Jager – Project Manager; UDOT Systems Planning & Programming
- Bill Juszczak – UDOT Maintenance
- Peter Tang and Rob Clayton – UDOT Traffic & Safety
- Rex Harris – UDOT Region 1
- Brandon Weston and Lars Anderson – UDOT Region 2

- Bob Westover – UDOT Region 3
- Clayton Wilson – UDOT Region 4

Advisory Committee members included:

- Stephen Bodily – Utah Transportation Commission
- Bevan Wilson – Utah Transportation Commission
- Ahmad Jaber – UDOT Systems Planning & Programming
- Rick Clasby – UDOT Motor Carriers Division
- Richard Clarke – UDOT Maintenance Division
- Carlos Machado – Federal Highway Administration
- Rolayne Fairclough – AAA
- Terry Smith – Utah Trucking Association
- Tracie Cayford – Utah Office of Tourism
- Chad Davis – Utah Office of Tourism
- John Quick – UDOT Systems Planning & Programming
- Dan Kuhn – UDOT Freight Planner
- Terry Johnson – UDOT Landscape Architect
- Robert Hull – UDOT Traffic & Safety
- Dal Hawks – UDOT Region 4

The Technical and Advisory committees participated in numerous meetings throughout the process and were integral in development of this Plan.

#### 1.4 Plan Documents

The Statewide Rest Area Plan is written to facilitate quick access to pertinent information.

This **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** is a separate document that highlights the key recommendations of the Plan and is intended to embody the essential elements of a future program document.

The **PRIMARY PLAN DOCUMENT** contains the key Plan elements, findings, and recommendations. **PART 1** provides a general introduction to the Plan. The first of two primary categories is represented in **PART 2** and relates to facilities. The second category is represented in **PART 3** and relates to program administration. **PART 4** is a comprehensive list of the primary and additional references reviewed.

The **APPENDICES** provide further details related to and supporting each section of the Primary Plan Document.

Pertinent spreadsheets developed as a part of this effort and other supplemental electronic data are included on a **Plan CD** with the Primary Plan Document. The attached **Executive Summary CD** includes an electronic version (pdf format) of this Executive Summary.

## PART 2 HIGHWAY REST FACILITIES

The highway rest facilities represent one of two critical focus areas in this planning effort. The overall success of the system, as it relates to safety and image, depends upon the condition of the facilities and related features, both individually and as a system.

Key recommendations by facility element area are summarized below.

### 2.1 Facility Type

The Utah Highway Rest Facility System consists of six different types of facilities: view areas, rest areas, welcome centers, public/private partnership rest stops, public/public facilities, and ports of entry. Recommendations related to which facilities should be included as a part of the Highway Rest Facility System are discussed below.

#### A. View Area

***It is recommended that UDOT maintain the existing view area facility designation as a part of the Highway Rest Facility System.***

#### B. Rest Area

***It is recommended that UDOT maintain the existing rest area facility designation as a part of the Highway Rest Facility System.***

#### C. Welcome Center

***It is recommended that UDOT maintain the existing welcome center facility designation as a part of the Highway Rest Facility System.***

#### D. Public/Private Partnership Rest Stop

The Plan concludes that the public/private partnership rest stop facility is effective in meeting the needs of the traveling public. It also concludes that these facilities are economically viable from a private sector perspective (Refer to Plan Section 2.2, C).

***It is recommended that UDOT continue to develop and expand the public/private partnership rest stop program as an effective element of the overall Highway Rest Facility System.***

#### E. Public/Public Facility

***It is recommended that UDOT continue to develop and expand the public/public facility program as an effective element of the Highway Rest Facility System.***

In addition to the public/public facilities shown in Figure 1, UDOT is working with the Arizona Department of Transportation and the Navajo Nation to complete a public/public visitor center facility on Highway 163 near the Utah/Arizona border. ***Once completed, it is recommended that this facility be added to the Highway Rest Facility System.***

#### F. Port of Entry

***It is recommended that UDOT maintain the existing port of entry facility designation as a part of the Highway Rest Facility System.***

F. Other Facilities

Other roadside facilities such as parking areas, view areas with no services, pull-outs, points of interest, and brake check areas are not included as formal elements of the highway rest facility system.

It is important to note, however, that many states are providing truck-only parking facilities and are including these facilities as key elements of their rest area system.

These facilities are generally basic in nature, providing no services other than truck parking spaces and advance signing indicating truck parking only.

These facilities are generally located on heavily traveled interstate truck routes and help address the issue of trucks parking on interchange on and off-ramps. Truck-only parking areas are often developed on the sites of closed rest areas, in conjunction with the closures.

Key issues include how to manage trash and whether to provide restroom facilities. States vary in their policies on both issues.

***It is recommended that UDOT further explore opportunities to provide truck-only parking facilities as an element of the overall highway rest facility system. The Statewide Rest Area Plan recommendations include provisions for truck-only parking facilities.***

***It is also recommended that future efforts related to providing truck-only facilities include an assessment of the following rest facilities as candidate locations:***

- ***Closed Dog Valley Rest Area (SB I-15 at mile post 136)***
- ***Closed Pine Creek Rest Area (NB I-15 at mile post 126)***
- ***Kimball Junction View Area – No Services (EB I-80 at mile post 143)***
- ***Kaysville/Farmington View Areas – No Services (NB & SB I-15 at mile post 326)***



**Kimball Junction View Area – No Services**

2.2 Overall Conditions

Information related to the overall condition of the highway rest facility system was obtained through conducting a facility inventory, facility ranking, and facility patron survey. Conclusions and recommendations are summarized below. For facility specific recommendations, refer to Executive Summary Section 2.6.

A. Facility Inventory

***Overall, the inventoried facilities are in relatively good condition given their age and provide adequate services and features. The useful life of the facilities is being extended through UDOT's use of a statewide maintenance contractor. Facility image has also improved as a result of on-site maintenance personnel.***

***It is recommended that UDOT prepare a highway rest facility preservation program to deal with ongoing preservation activities (See Primary Plan Section 2.5, D, 3 for additional information).***

B. Facility Ranking

***In looking at specific facility criteria, it is concluded that key issues relate to adjacent highway AADT, adjacent fatigue crash experience, proximity to adjacent cities or towns with services, truck parking supply and automobile parking supply.***

***It is also concluded that the highest ranking facilities in terms of overall need for attention include:***

- ***All view area facilities***
- ***Silver City Rest Area***
- ***Brigham Welcome Center***
- ***Perry Rest Area***
- ***Tucker Rest Area***
- ***St. George Welcome Center***
- ***Northbound Lunt Park Rest Area***
- ***Crescent Junction Rest Area***
- ***Southbound Kanarraville Rest Area***
- ***Thompson Welcome Center***

C. Facility Patron Survey

The survey effort targeted three patron groups; general motorists, commercial vehicle drivers, and public/private partnership rest stop patrons. The following is a summary of conclusions related to specific patron groups or survey areas:

1. Traveler Needs

***It is concluded that traveler's primary needs are being fulfilled through the highway rest facilities. Survey findings support the effort to expand the public/private partnership rest stop program in an effort to better fulfill traveler needs.***

2. Daytime versus Nighttime Facility Preference

***It is concluded that elements such as lighting and security presence are important elements of public facilities when considering nighttime conditions. It was also concluded that public/private partnership rest stop facilities fill an important need during nighttime conditions due to motorist familiarity, lighting, and security concerns.***

3. Amenities and Features

***It is concluded that the facility features currently provided are generally adequate. The lower importance ranking of some features relates more to the lower percentage of motorists who use these features rather than the overall importance of the***

**feature itself. The motorists using these features consider them to be very important.**

4. Commercial Drivers

**It is concluded that public and private facility features provided are generally adequate. However, commercial truck drivers feel there is a general need to increase the number of convenient and safe truck parking stalls at public facilities.**

5. Public/Private Partnership Rest Stop Facilities

**It is concluded that public/private partnership rest stop facilities are effective in meeting the needs of the traveling public. It is also concluded that these facilities are economically viable from a private sector perspective.**

### 2.3 Design Concepts

With sixty-three highway rest facilities, there are numerous opportunities to link facilities to the many scenic, cultural and historic elements that exist in the communities and regions throughout the state.

UDOT developed layout and design standards for rest area and welcome center facilities to improve the design and construction process as well as assist with traveler recognition.

A perceived drawback to this approach is the limitation to customize the “standard plan” to maximize the surrounding cultural, scenic, and site environmental opportunities. These facilities represent some of the state’s best opportunities to enhance and elevate visitor and tourist experiences while in Utah.

Another issue is that a standard plan may limit the ability to utilize Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds for facility upgrades and construction activities (refer to **Plan document Section 3.2, A** for additional information regarding Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds).

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) addressed similar issues as a part of their 1999 Safety Rest Area Program. Their rest area system had become dated and in need of modernization. Some new rest areas were needed while some existing facilities were in need of select upgrades and reconstruction.

The TxDOT Program was written around the Federal Transportation Enhancement Activities outlined by the Federal Highway Administration in their publication A Guide to Federal Aid Programs and Projects. This effort has resulted in the construction of twenty rest area facilities totaling over \$70 Million in Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds. TxDOT spends approximately twenty-five percent of their total Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds allocation on rest area related projects.

UDOT received approximately \$6.5 million in Transportation Enhancement Funds in 2006. Of this amount, one-third (\$2 million) was allocated for use by UDOT regions on eligible projects. The remaining two-thirds (\$4.5 million) was available to cities and counties by application to UDOT’s Enhancement Advisory Committee (EAC).

Design concepts similar to those developed by TxDOT are included below. These concepts are a key element of the Plan.

***It is recommended that wherever possible, UDOT should incorporate the following design concepts into all highway rest facilities.***

**A. Scenic Locations**

Facility spacing along Utah's primary travel corridors is an important issue as it relates to facility location. Perhaps the most important variable in determining the exact location is the scenery. A pleasant natural terrain is the feature that can only be provided through site selection. Pleasing vistas, interesting rock outcroppings, or relaxing tree-shaded locations are examples of location selection.



**Black Dragon Canyon**

**B. Pedestrian Features**



**Echo Canyon Rest Area**

Long monotonous trips give drivers little chance to stretch their limbs. It is UDOT's intent to provide pedestrian features at newly constructed and renovated rest areas. This should be accomplished by providing playground equipment, exercise stations or walking trails with educational and historical plaques describing the flora and fauna native to the particular region or archeological displays that might be related to the specific location.

**C. Landscaping**

UDOT should provide appropriate landscaping at highway rest facilities. Through the use of landscaping materials native to the area, maintenance costs will be reduced while providing travelers with an opportunity to observe Utah's diverse range of plant types. Whether observing Great Basin and Canyonlands sagebrush or gamble oak of the mountain valleys, the rest facilities will offer a unique experience.



**Native Landscape Elements at the Thompson Welcome Center**

**D. Historic Preservation**

UDOT should seek after locations of historical interest for rest facility placement. Through project design coordination with local and state historical societies, it may be possible to include items of historical interest with facility upgrades and new facility construction. Perhaps an old bridge or historic building that is no longer in service could be preserved as a part of a highway rest facility project.

Display areas with local historical information and plaques may provide another opportunity to inform and educate travelers as to Utah's rich and abundant history.



**Historic Barn in Richmond, UT**

**E. Regional Vernacular**



**Castle Ruin at Hovenweep National Monument**

Utah has been influenced by many different cultures. These cultures are often reflected in the local and regional architecture. From the Native American influences of the Ute, Paiute, Goshute, Shoshone, and Navajo tribes to the varied heritages of the Mormon pioneers and Utah’s mining and railroad workers.

Wherever possible, elements of the region’s architecture or cultural influence should be recognized in the highway rest facility design.

Buildings and site elements should have appropriate “look and feel” elements for the area.

Additional features such as murals can be added to highlight site specific interests and reinforce indigenous themes.

**F. Safety and Educational Activities**

Maps, weather and highway conditions, driving directions, and other travel-related subjects represent a sampling of items that can be shared with motorists. UDOT has a wealth of highway safety information that is well suited for distribution at highway rest facilities. In cooperation with area civic groups, the traveler could also learn about the area’s culture, environment, geology, history, industry, plants, wildlife, and nearby points of interest.



**Ghost Rocks View Area Interpretive Information on Local Coal Operations**

**G. Environmental Issues**

Protecting and enhancing the environmental features for each rest facility is of critical importance. Activities including habitat conservation can provide travelers with an opportunity to obtain a first hand look at nature. Design of water, wastewater and drainage systems that have minimal impact on the environment should be used. Some design elements may even provide the opportunity to enhance or repair disturbed areas.



**Weber River adjacent to the Weber Canyon Rest Area**

Demonstration projects should be developed so travelers can learn about solar power, wind power, alternate water and wastewater treatment and disposal methods and other unique subjects. New and renovated facilities should use recycled or on-site construction materials to enhance opportunities for resource conservation.

**2.4 Facility Features**

Facility features play an important role in merging the need to provide a facility that emphasizes the safety aspects of moving people and goods with showcasing the unique identity and character of the State’s diverse culture, environment and activities. The design concepts guide the process of deciding which features to provide at a given facility. Current features, new features and recommended features

for facilities are described in **Plan document Section 2.4**. The following summarizes the recommendations related to new and recommended features.

A. New Features

Of the many features that are available to use at highway rest facilities, the following three were seen as having the greatest potential for positive impact if implemented as standard features at Utah highway rest facilities.

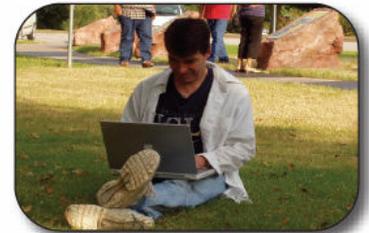
***It is recommended that the following features be incorporated into highway rest facilities.***

A brief summary of these features is included below.

1. Wireless Internet (Wi-Fi)

Many states are offering Wi-Fi access at their rest area and visitor/welcome center facilities for use by the public. The feedback from agency representatives and motorists has been overwhelmingly positive.

This service provides motorists with free access to such items as road maps, weather and road condition information, tourist information, and travel and safety tips. Additional internet access, beyond the initial road information page, is often offered to motorists via subscription with a third party internet provider.



A key element of this feature is that all equipment, maintenance and technical support is generally provided by the third party internet provider at no cost to the state. In some instances, a percentage of the profits from subscriptions are paid to the department of transportation.

The primary purpose of the feature is to make real time traveler information available to the motoring public free of charge and in a manner that encourages drivers to make regular stops and return to the road rested and more alert.

The feature also provides additional opportunities for such items as video surveillance as well as upload and download capabilities for maintenance personnel, highway patrol officers, and other official purposes.

2. Playground Equipment

Playground equipment has become a common and important enhancement feature provided at many rest area and welcome center facilities throughout the United States.



The primary purpose of the feature is to provide an activity for children and families that encourages drivers to make regular stops and return to the road rested and more alert.

Similarly, exercise stations and paths may be provided for adults. This aids in refreshing and revitalizing motorists so they are more alert when they return to the road.

3. Interpretative Displays and Related Information

In keeping with the design concepts, there is a wealth of information that is well suited for distribution at highway rest facilities. Interpretive displays could feature an area's culture, environment, geology, history, industry, plants, wildlife, or nearby points of interest.



The displays could be combined with activities that provide motorists with an opportunity to obtain a first hand look at nature. The activities could feature a demonstration project related to solar power, wind power, alternate water and wastewater treatment or disposal methods.

B. Recommended Features

***The following are recommended minimum and additional features, grouped by facility type that should be incorporated into existing and future highway rest facilities.*** New features are designated with bold and italicized text.

It is important to note that all features should be included in accordance with the design concepts.

1. View Area

The recommended minimum features for view area facilities include:

- Pit toilets
- Paved parking area
- Adequate ramp system or driveway into and out of the paved parking area
- Adequate advanced signing
- Internal directional signing
- ADA accessible
- Trash receptacles
- ***Parking area lighting***
- ***Sidewalks***

Additional features that may be provided include:

- Picnic tables and shelters
- ***Emergency telephone***
- ***Interior restroom lighting***
- ***Playground equipment***
- ***Exercise stations***
- ***Wi-Fi access***
- ***Landscaping with native vegetation and natural materials***
- ***Interpretive signing, displays, trails, exhibits and location information***

2. Rest Area

The recommended minimum features for rest area facilities include:

- Flush toilets
- Paved parking area
- Interior and exterior lighting
- Drinking water
- Adequate ramp system or driveway into and out of the paved parking area
- Adequate advanced signing
- Internal directional signing
- ADA accessible
- Trash receptacles
- Sheltered picnic tables/area
- Location information (state map), displays and exhibits
- Separation of vehicles and pedestrians
- Landscaping with native vegetation, natural materials and irrigation system
- ***Interpretive signing, displays, trails, exhibits and location information***
- ***Wi-Fi access***

Additional features that may be provided include:

- Family style restrooms
- Designated pet exercise area
- On-site maintenance personnel
- Pay telephones
- ***Separate truck and automobile parking areas***
- Vending machines
- ***Tourist and traveler information***
- ***Sculptures or other artwork***
- ***Playground equipment /exercise stations***

3. Welcome Center

The recommended minimum features for welcome center facilities are the same as those required for rest areas with the following additions:

- Vending machines
- Trained tourism representatives
- Statewide, regional, and local tourist, and historical information as a fixed display or brochure
- ***Separate truck and automobile parking areas***
- ***Family style restrooms***
- ***Designated pet exercise area***
- ***On-site maintenance personnel***

Additional features that may be provided include:

- Interior computer kiosks
- ***Sculptures or other artwork***

4. Public/Private Partnership Rest Stop

The recommended minimum features to be provided by the private entity include:

- Placement of state approved highway memorial markers at the appropriate location onsite
- Well lit and marked pedestrian access between parking areas and business facilities
- Restroom facilities with ten stalls if adjacent to I-15 (five men's, five women's)
- Restroom facilities with eight stalls if adjacent to non-I-15 highways (4 men's, 4 women's)
- Twenty-four hour a day, 365 days per year operations
- No sexually-oriented vending machines in restrooms
- A minimum of one on-site employee at all times
- ADA accessible facilities
- One drinking fountain
- **Signs placed in conspicuous locations indicating that the traveling public may use the rest room facilities free of charge**
- **Well lit and secure facilities and parking areas**
- **Picnic tables and shelters**
- **Separate parking by vehicle type (commercial trucks/RV's and automobiles) per AASHTO guidelines**
- **A minimum of 500 square feet of regularly maintained grass and/or other appropriate landscaping**
- **A minimum of two telephones in good working order**
- **Driveway and access designed in accordance with UDOT standards**
- **Adequate parking to meet a projected 10-year demand for commercial trucks and automobiles based on AASHTO guidelines**
- **State and regional tourist information (provided by the Utah State Office of Tourism)**

Additional features that may be provided include:

- Landscaping with native vegetation, natural materials and irrigation system
- **Playground equipment /exercise stations**
- **Wi-Fi access**
- **Family style restrooms**
- **Designated pet exercise area**
- **On-site maintenance personnel**
- **Interpretive signing, displays, trails, exhibits**

5. Public/Public Facility

With these facilities, UDOT generally provides resources for land acquisition activities, facility construction, and/or additional facility features. Generally, these facilities are operated and maintained by the partnering entity.

In these situations, minimum and additional features should continue to be determined on a case-by-case basis in cooperation with the partnering entities and in accordance with the design concepts.

***Where UDOT is the primary participant in the development of public/public facilities, it is recommended that these facilities incorporate minimum and additional features as appropriate for the site and in accordance with the design concepts.***

Minimum features may include:

- Flush toilets
- Paved parking area
- Interior and exterior lighting
- Drinking water
- Adequate ramp system or driveway into and out of the paved parking area
- Adequate advanced signing
- Internal directional signing
- ADA accessible
- Location information (state map), displays and exhibits
- Separation of vehicles and pedestrians
- Trash receptacles
- Landscaping with native vegetation, natural materials and irrigation system

Additional features that may be provided include:

- Sheltered picnic tables/area
- Interpretive signing, displays, trails, exhibits and location information
- Playground equipment /exercise stations
- Wi-Fi access
- Family style restrooms
- Vending machines
- Designated pet exercise area
- On-site maintenance personnel
- Pay telephones
- Separate truck and automobile parking areas
- Tourist and traveler information
- Sculptures or other artwork
- Interior computer kiosks

6. Port of Entry

***In addition to the features provided by the Motor Carries Division for inspections, it is recommended that Port of Entry facilities provide:***

- Paved parking areas for short and long-term *commercial truck parking*
- Restrooms
- Lighting
- Trash receptacles
- On-site personnel
- **Wi-Fi access**

## 2.5 Design, Operations and Maintenance Criteria

In general, facility design, operations and maintenance criteria should be consistent with the design concepts and the AASHTO Guide for Development of Rest Areas on Major Arterials and Freeways. The latter publication serves as an excellent resource on a wide variety of facility criterion.

In completing the literature review, facility inventory, and patron survey, it was evident that specific guidance regarding facility spacing, signing, operations and maintenance of UDOT facilities was necessary and appropriate. Refer to the Plan document for additional details related to the following recommendations.

### A. Urbanized Area Facilities

***It is recommended that UDOT formalize its policy not to construct or maintain highway rest facilities within urbanized areas.***

### B. Facility Spacing

***It is recommended that the spacing between Highway Rest Facilities should be a maximum of one hour based on drive time. For interstate facilities this generally represents a maximum distance between 60 to 75 miles. For non-interstate facilities, the maximum distance generally ranges from 50 to 65 miles.***

***On routes where public/private partnership rest stops are provided, an approximate half hour drive time spacing between the public/private partnership rest stop and adjacent facilities is recommended as appropriate.***

***It is also recommended that Port of Entry facilities not be considered when evaluating spacing due to the limited population served and the limited services provided.***

### C. Advanced Signing

A key element of the Plan involved identifying high fatigue related crash segments on highway facilities. As a part of this effort, it was noted that many of the highway segments with high fatigue related crash experience are adjacent to or near highway rest facilities.

It was concluded that motorists may not be receiving adequate advanced notification regarding the existence of, distance to, or features provided at highway rest facilities.

To assist in providing motorists with adequate advanced notification regarding the existence of, distance to, or

features provided at highway rest facilities the following recommendations are made:



1. ***It is recommended that advance signage be provided in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).***

2. ***It is recommended that additional advance sign placement guidelines specific to Utah be provided.***

3. ***It is recommended that drowsy driver signs be considered for installation on highway facilities where fatigue related crash rates and the percentage of fatigue crashes to total crashes is high (fatigue rates greater than 0.25 fatigue crashes per million vehicle miles of travel; greater than 20% fatigue crashes to total crashes).***



Initial Advance Drowsy Driver Sign

4. ***It is recommended that UDOT develop rules or appropriate legislation that limits the use of the phrase “Rest Stop” and “Public/Private Partnership” on a business’ premises, on-site private signage, and advertising media to only those businesses participating in the Program.***

D. Operations and Maintenance

The key operations and maintenance criteria areas that are specific to UDOT include maintenance responsibilities, on-site personnel, seasonal operations, use by non-profit service organizations, and joint use opportunities.

The following sections summarize key criteria for each area.

1. Maintenance Responsibility

The following sections outline maintenance recommendations related to UDOT and its partner entities.

a. UDOT Complex and Regions

***It is recommended that UDOT continue current maintenance practices and activities.***

b. Partner Entities

***It is recommended that additional guidance related to the maintenance of public/public facilities be developed as future partnering opportunities arise.***

2. On-Site Personnel

Currently, on-site personnel are provided at all of the facilities being maintained by UDOT’s maintenance contractor.

***It is recommended that UDOT continue to provide on-site personnel and duty hours in accordance with current practices.***

3. Maintenance Preservation Program

Based on the current condition of the system, it is estimated that an initial five-year concerted effort is required to address the primary activities. Preservation activities could continue after this initial five-year period, but at a more moderate schedule.

***It is recommended that UDOT prepare a Highway Rest Facility Preservation Program that formally documents the preservation activities, facilities, and associated costs and schedules.***

4. Seasonal Operations

***It is recommended that UDOT work with public partners to explore options that would provide twenty-four hour a day, seven day a week, 365 day a year access to basic services such as restrooms, drinking fountains and telephones.***

5. Involvement of Non-Profit Service Organizations

***It is recommended that UDOT further explore development and implementation of a formal program and agreement defining policies and applicant requirements related to donation type services and Adopt-A-Rest Area activities.***

6. Joint Use Opportunities/Facilities

***It is recommended that UDOT continue exploring opportunities to partner with federal, state and local agencies, non-profit organizations and private businesses to develop joint use facilities. This includes further development and formalization of partnering policies, procedures, and criteria beyond those provided through UDOT's current programs.***

***It is also recommended that UDOT specifically focus this effort towards new facilities and facilities in need of major upgrades or reconstruction.***

## 2.6 Facility Specific Recommendations, Time Frames, and Costs

The following is an overall summary of costs by timeframe and improvement type.

A. Immediate (0 through 1 yr)

The cost associated with immediate recommendations is \$392,000. This cost is associated with sign installation activities, a detailed location study for the Tucker Rest Area facility, and preservation activities.

B. Near-Term (2 through 5 yrs)

The total cost for near-term recommendations is approximately \$20,900,000. Specific improvements and costs are as follows:

- Signing (\$153,000)
- Playground equipment and interpretive displays (\$1,260,000)
- Site specific studies (\$50,000 – Echo Canyon Rest Area and Echo Welcome Center)
- Construct new parking at seven existing facilities (\$10,500,000 – NB & SB Kanarraville Rest Areas, NB & SB Lunt Park Rest Areas, Perry Rest Area and Brigham Welcome Center, Kimball Junction No Services View Area)
- Permanently remove closed rest area elements at two facilities (\$2,000,000 – Pine Creek and Dog Valley Rest Areas)

- Purchase land for St. George Welcome Center replacement facility (\$2,000,000)
- Construct a new joint use facility to replace the Tucker Rest Area facility (\$4,000,000)
- Preparation of a highway rest facility preservation program (\$100,000)
- Preservation activities (\$800,000)

This represents an annual investment of approximately \$5.2 million per year from year two through five.

Of the total it is estimated that \$7,260,000, or approximately \$1.8 million annually, could be funded through Transportation Enhancement funds.

C. Mid-Term (6 through 10 yrs)

The total cost for mid-term recommendations is \$10,780,000. Specific improvements and costs are as follows:

- Playground equipment and interpretive displays (\$280,000)
- Construct new joint use facilities to replace the Ivie Creek and EB & WB Salt Flats Rest Area facilities (\$8,000,000)
- Convert old EB & WB Salt Flats Rest Area facilities to truck parking only facilities (\$2,000,000)
- Preservation activities (\$500,000)

This represents an annual investment of approximately \$2.15 million per year from year six through ten.

Of the total it is estimated that \$8,280,000, or approximately \$1.7 million annually, could be funded through Transportation Enhancement funds.

D. Long-Term (11 through 20 yrs)

The total cost for long-term recommendations is \$21,000,000. Specific improvements and costs are as follows:

- Construct new Echo Canyon Rest Area facility at a different location (\$6,000,000)
- Permanently remove the old Echo Canyon Rest Area facility elements (\$1,000,000)
- Construct a new joint use facility to replace the Perry Rest Area and Brigham Welcome Center facilities (\$4,000,000)
- Convert old Perry Rest Area and Brigham Welcome Center facilities to truck parking only facilities (\$2,000,000)
- Construct new joint use facility to replace the Crescent Junction Rest Area and Thompson Welcome Center facilities (\$4,000,000)
- Permanently remove the old Perry Rest Area and Brigham Welcome Center facility elements (\$2,000,000)
- Reconstruct the Echo Welcome Center building and related structures (\$1,500,000)
- Preservation activities (\$500,000)

This represents an annual investment of \$2.1 million per year from year eleven through twenty.

Of the total it is estimated that \$15,500,000, or approximately \$1.6 million annually, could be funded through Transportation Enhancement funds.

**Table 2 and Table 3 in the Primary Plan Document** summarizes specific facility recommendations and provides timeframes as well as planning level cost estimates.

### PART 3 PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The program administration elements of the highway rest facility system represent the second of the two critical focus areas of this planning effort. Much of the success of the current program and continued success of future activities will be directly related to how well the administrative elements of the program are developed and implemented.

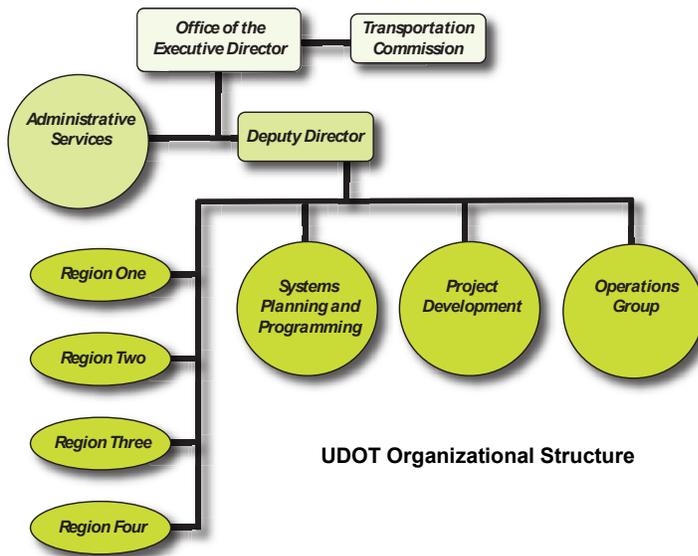
Through evaluation of current conditions within the Department and research of other state programs, three areas stand out as needing the most significant attention. These areas include:

- Organizational structure
- Funding and related rest area facility programs
- Outreach and education efforts

Recommendations are identified through the use of bold and italicized text. ***All program administration recommendations are intended to be initiated and completed as soon as possible.***

#### 3.1 Organizational Structure

UDOT is organized such that the responsibility for key highway rest facility elements is shared among various Department groups.



Systems Planning and Programming currently oversee highway rest facility efforts related to monitoring conditions, identifying needs, establishing plans, and determining program and project schedules. It currently administers the public/private partnership rest stop program.

With the Operations Group, the Maintenance Division oversees the statewide maintenance contract for highway rest facilities. The Traffic and Safety Division provides key input related to the safety function of highway rest facilities including overseeing safety studies, safety-related product recommendations,

and safety-related education efforts. The Motor Carriers Division also falls under the Operations Group and its responsibility is related to port of entry facilities throughout the state.

Included in the Project Development Group is the Environmental Services Division which provides key input related to environmental issues including landscaping, wetlands, and architectural standards for rest area and welcome center facilities.

Each UDOT Region is also integrally involved in overseeing administration, construction, and maintenance of all state roads, highways and freeways, and related facilities within their Region. They are also responsible to negotiate

public/public facility agreements and to facilitate and negotiate agreements related to public/private partnership rest stop facilities.

Finally, yet importantly, the Transportation Commission is responsible for prioritizing projects and deciding how funds are spent.

This sharing of responsibilities is appropriate and necessary; however, it presents some significant challenges in relation to coordination, communication, and follow-up activities.

State departments of transportation (DOT) all differ when it comes to organizational structure and the division of responsibilities, however, state DOTs generally address highway rest facility issues through management by a specific department or by a committee.

The highway rest facility system will require continuous attention and oversight. The development and implementation of a formal organizational structure is critical to a successful highway rest facility program.

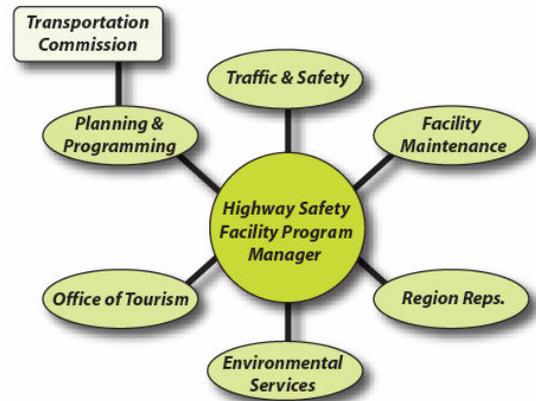
***Due to the sharing of responsibilities among so many UDOT groups and divisions, it is recommended that UDOT organize a Highway Rest Facility Committee (HRFC) to oversee the development and implementation of a formal Highway Rest Facility System Program (HRFP).***

General recommendations related to the committee structure and responsibilities are as follows.

1. Committee Structure

A Rest Area and Welcome Center Task Force was established in 1995 to oversee specific facility planning and programming issues. The HRFC would be structured in a similar manner, being made up of a single representative from each of the following groups, divisions or entities:

- Systems Planning and Programming Group
- Operations Group, Maintenance Division
- Operations Group, Traffic and Safety Division
- Project Development Group, Environmental Services Division
- Each UDOT Region
- Utah State Office of Tourism
- Highway Rest Facility Program Manager



Over time, the committee could be expanded to include additional members as follows:

- Transportation Commission
- Utah Department of Public Safety
- UDOT Systems Planning and Programming Group – Planning Division (Long Range and Freight Planning)

- UDOT Systems Planning and Programming Group – Program Financing Division
- UDOT Motor Carriers Division
- State Parks
- FHWA
- Utah Trucking Association
- AAA

Members would be added based on the need for regular or ongoing input from a particular organization or discipline.

2. Committee Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the HRFC would be to oversee the development and implementation of a formal highway rest facility program.

Initially, this includes refinement of the Plan recommendations and coordination with the Transportation Commission on the adoption of the recommendations as a formal program.

First order tasks include:

- Assessing and prioritizing appropriate solutions for system facility gaps on non-interstate highways
- Prioritizing candidate transportation enhancement fund amenity improvements
- Studying issues related to truck only parking facilities
- Finalizing the facility signing recommendations

The committee would meet on a monthly or quarterly basis to discuss, coordinate and make decisions regarding significant program issues, policies, and processes.

General responsibilities of the HRFC include:

- Regular coordination on all highway rest facilities
- Planning and programming of highway rest facility projects
- Initiation of and assistance with additional study efforts and project specific improvements
- Development and review of highway rest facility related agreements, processes, and policies
- Regular updates of the highway rest facility program and related evaluation tools
- Regular coordination with the Transportation Commission on all program elements
- Regular coordination with non-committee partners on highway rest facility issues

Coordination with the Transportation Commission would take place through the Systems Planning and Programming Group.

### 3. Program Manager Responsibilities

It should be the Program Manager's direct responsibility to oversee all program development and implementation activities. This includes primary responsibility to oversee all HRFC activities. General responsibilities should include:

- Program and project administration
- HRFC administration and oversight
- Assessing and adjusting facility project and program schedules
- Developing project scopes of work
- Hiring consultants as necessary to plan and design projects
- Managing consultant work to deliver project designs as scheduled

***It is recommended that UDOT further define specific Program Manager duties and responsibilities.***

***Initially, it is recommended that UDOT procure a consultant to function as Program Manager.*** To assist UDOT in this effort, a sample Program Manager Request for Proposal (RFP) from the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) is included in **Appendix 3A of the primary study document.** ***It is recommended that UDOT further develop contract terms, etc., using the model provided by ITD.***

Once the program is established and implementation is well under way, it is estimated that UDOT could assume all program manager responsibilities within three years following the adoption of a formal program. This could include assignment of an internal UDOT Program Manager with Highway Rest Facility Program responsibilities approximately equal to a half-time FTE (full-time employee).

### 3.2 Funding and Related Rest Area Facility Programs

The purpose of this section is to explore more non-traditional funding sources and rest area related programs, specifically Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds, the FHWA Interstate Oasis program, and FHWA's Special Experimental Project Number 15 (SEP-15) program.

#### A. Transportation Enhancement Funds

***In combination with the recommendations related to design concepts, joint use facilities, and additional facility features, it is recommended that UDOT set aside some portion of TE funds for use on projects related to highway rest facilities (see Executive Summary Section 2.6)***

#### B. FHWA Interstate Oasis Program

On October 18, 2006, FHWA published the Final Interstate Oasis Program and Policy. This program was based on UDOT's public/private partnership rest stop program.

***It is recommended that UDOT carefully consider the impacts of participation in the Interstate Oasis program versus maintaining the current, or an enhanced, public/private partnership rest stop program.***

## C. SEP-15 Program

***It was determined that The SEP-15 program does not allow a pilot project that involves the commercialization of rest areas within interstate rights-of-way.***

## 3.3 Outreach and Education Efforts

The final key program administration item involves highway rest facility outreach and education efforts. The highway rest facility system represents a substantial overall and recurring annual investment on the part of UDOT and should be emphasized as an important resource to the traveling public.

***It is recommended that UDOT complete the following activities in relation to outreach and education efforts:***

## A. Development of a Highway Rest Facility Web Page

***Many states offer interactive web pages exclusively devoted to the rest area program. Texas' web page (<http://www.dot.state.tx.us/mnt/sra/default.htm>) is a good example of what should be provided, with links to interactive maps and other related information.***

***It is recommended that UDOT develop a highway rest facility web page similar to that provided by TxDOT.***

***In conjunction with Wi-Fi services recommended as a part of the Plan (see Section 2.4, B), it is also recommended that UDOT oversee the development of a Wi-Fi home page similar that provided by TxDOT (<http://www.textreks.com/>).***

## B. Develop and Implement a Formal Public/Private Partnership Rest Stop Promotional Campaign

***It is recommended that UDOT develop and implement a formal public/private partnership rest stop promotional campaign.***

## C. Develop and Implement a Formal Comment Program

***In conjunction with the development of the highway rest facility web page, it is recommended that UDOT improve the comment process by allowing motorists to comment electronically. These comments should be reviewed and where appropriate, responded to.***

***In conjunction with the statewide maintenance contractor, it is also recommended that UDOT further develop the distribution and collection system for written comments as well as website and email-based comments. All comments should be considered as a part of UDOT's Maintenance Management Quality Assurance (MMQA) program.***

## D. Ad Campaigns

***It is recommended that UDOT explore opportunities to expand the current drowsy driver and zero fatalities campaigns to include or involve highway rest facilities.***

***It is also recommended that additional efforts to publicize facilities should be explored. For example, a publicity campaign should be initiated as a part of bring Wi-Fi services to highway rest facilities.***

- E. Update the Official State Highway Map

***It is recommended that the official state highway map be updated to include only those highway rest facilities addressed as part of this Plan. The map should also be updated to reflect public/private partnership and port of entry facility locations.***

- F. Partner Opportunities with the Office of Tourism

***It is recommended that UDOT continue working with the Office of Tourism to see that traveler and tourism information is available at all highway rest facilities. UDOT should also explore opportunities to coordinate highway rest facility awareness campaigns with the Office of Tourism advertisement efforts.***