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**NEW REPORT IDENTIFIES TOP TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO SUPPORT UTAH’S ECONOMIC GROWTH, INCLUDING PROJECTS TO ADDRESS DETERIORATED AND CONGESTED ROADWAYS, DEFICIENT BRIDGES, INADEQUATE TRANSIT, AND TO PROVIDE NEEDED SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS**

**Salt Lake City, Utah** – Transportation improvements are needed in Utah to address deficient, crowded or congested roads, highways, bridges and transit systems in Utah that threaten to stifle the state’s economic growth and development. This is according to a new report released today by [TRIP](http://tripnet.org), a Washington, DC based national transportation research organization.

The report, “[\*Utah’s Most Critical Surface Transportation Projects to Support Economic Growth and Quality of Life\*](#),” identifies the transportation improvements most needed to support economic growth and quality of life in Utah. These improvements include projects to build, expand or modernize highways or bridges, as well as improvements and capacity expansion to the state’s rail and public transportation systems. Making these needed transportation improvements would enhance economic development opportunities throughout the state by increasing mobility and freight movement, easing congestion, improving safety, and making Utah an attractive place to live, visit and do business. A lack of adequate transportation funding is the constraining factor in developing and delivering these needed improvements.

The most needed transportation improvements to support economic growth in the Wasatch Front area, as identified by the TRIP report, are as follows. Additional information about each project can be found in the report.

<b>WASATCH FRONT</b>
Construction of the SR-85/Mountain View Corridor
Adding Two General Purpose Lanes on I-15 in Box Elder and Weber Counties
Widening and Reconstruction of SR-201 in Salt Lake County
Bus System Optimization
Widening and Reconstruction of I-15 in Davis County
Commuter Rail (FrontRunner) Community Connection Projects
Widening and Reconstruction of Portions of SR 108 in Weber and Davis Counties
New I-15 Interchanges at 1800N and Shepard Lane
Widening and Reconstruction of I-15 near Hill Air Force Base
Electrification and Double Tracking of Commuter Rail- First Phase

The TRIP report also identifies the most needed improvements in Central Utah, the Provo/Orem/Mountainland Region, and Southern Utah. Additional information about each project can be found in the report.

<b>CENTRAL UTAH</b>
<b>Adding Uphill Passing Lanes to US-40</b>
<b>Adding Uphill Passing Lanes to US-191</b>
<b>Interchange Improvements and a New Interchange at Kimball Junction</b>
<b>Adding Two General Purpose Lanes to a portion of I-80</b>
<b>Adding Two General Purpose or HOV Lanes to SR-248 in Park City</b>
<b>PROVO/OREM/MOUNTAINLAND REGION</b>
<b>Utah County Bus Improvements</b>
<b>Adding a new HOV Interchange at I-15 and 800 S</b>
<b>Bus Rapid Transit in Provo</b>
<b>SR-75 Widening and Reconstruction in Springville</b>
<b>Draper to Orem Light Rail Line</b>
<b>Widening and Reconstruction of Portion of US 89 in Utah County</b>
<b>WASHINGTON CO./DIXIE MPA/SOUTHERN UTAH</b>
<b>Adding New Capacity to the Western Corridor in Washington County</b>
<b>Widening and Reconstructing Segments of I-15 in Washington County</b>
<b>Complete the New Southern Parkway in St. George</b>
<b>Adding Uphill Passing Lanes to Three Sections of I-15</b>
<b>Intersection Improvements on SR-18 in Washington County</b>

According to the TRIP report, eight percent of Utah’s major urban roads are in poor condition, while nine percent of the state’s rural roads are in poor condition. Three percent of bridges are structurally deficient, meaning they have significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports or other major components. An additional 11 percent of the state’s bridges are functionally obsolete. These bridges no longer meet modern design standards, often because of narrow lanes, inadequate clearances or poor alignment.

"Utah's Unified Transportation Plan identifies the comprehensive investments in state and local roads, transit and bike projects needed across Utah," said Andrew Gruber, Executive Director of the Wasatch Front Regional Council. "If funded, the \$11.3 billion shortfall identified for our critical transportation projects will support our growing economy, improve our air quality and enhance our overall quality of life."

According to Utah’s Unified Transportation Plan, the state will need a total of \$70.1 billion over the next 30 years to fund needed highway and transit maintenance, operations, preservation and capacity expansions. However, during that time, only \$43.4 billion will be available from current revenue sources, leaving a funding gap which includes \$11.3 billion in prioritized transportation improvements that remain unfunded over the next 30 years.

Enhancing critical segments of Utah’s transportation system will boost the state’s economy in the short-term by creating jobs in construction and related fields. In the long-term these improvements will enhance economic competitiveness and improve the quality of life for the state’s residents and visitors by reducing travel delays and transportation costs, improving access and mobility, improving safety, and stimulating sustained job growth. Sustaining Utah’s long-term economic growth and maintaining the state’s quality of life will require increased investment in expanding the capacity of the state’s transportation system, which will enhance business productivity and support short- and long-term job creation in the state.

“Investing in Utah’s transportation system and addressing these challenges by improving the condition and efficiency of the state’s roads, bridges and transit systems will be an effective step in boosting the state’s economy, enhancing quality of life and making Utah an attractive place to live, work and visit,” said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP.