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## ASPA Annual Awards Program

The Utah Chapter of ASPA has joined with the Governor's Awards for Excellence to honor public employees who have demonstrated a commitment to excellence. ASPA will honor the following individuals:

**SENATOR ED MAYNE** (posthumously) – *Senator Arthur V. Watkins Distinguished Service Award for an Elected Official* – accepted by Senator Karen Mayne

**DOUGLAS G. RICHINS**, Director of the Division of Purchasing and General Services – *Dr. G. Homer Durham Distinguished Service Award for an Appointed Official*

**BILL CRIM**, Vice President of Community Impact and Public Policy, United Way of Salt Lake – *F. Ted Hebert Distinguished Service Award for Outstanding Contributions to Public Administration*

These individuals, along with other public employees being recognized by the Governor, will be honored at a reception in the Capitol Rotunda on Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. We appreciate all the work they have done to make our communities better.

### *Declaration*

*Governor Jon M. Huntsman, Jr., Governor of the State of  
Utah, declares June 3, 2008 as  
Utah Public Employee Recognition Day*

# APRIL LUNCHEON

By Chris Hillman  
Clearfield City Manager

## Utah's Roads & Rail: The Next Ten Years

Chris Hillman, Clearfield City Manager, introduced the panel members. He indicated that these four individuals are at the very center of all transportation issues that we face in the state.

Senator Sheldon Killpack  
J. Stuart Adams, Transportation Commission Chair  
Ralph Jackson, UTA Deputy Chief  
Carlos Bracerias, UDOT Deputy Director

**Senator Killpack** explained that a downward trend in the economy started in 2001. In order to get the necessary funding for education, all other budgets in the state were pillaged. As a result, transportation funding was hit across the board, including the Highway Fund and other projects whose long term financing was put in jeopardy.

Senator Killpack compared long term economic development to a three legged stool. Education is one leg; another leg is the ability to move goods, services and people. The third leg is the business climate—the tax system. You cannot remove one leg and have strong economic development.

Many times in transportation we play catch up—we play defense more than we play offense. Senator Killpack discussed ways the state can help this situation.

- Corridor preservation can save us billions of dollars in the future
- Finding long-term resources dedicated to transportation

He said we have been vigilant in finding those resources. He also discussed how the funding was acquired for I-15 in Utah County.

**J. Stuart Adams**, Utah Transportation Commission Chair, explained the make-up of the Commission. It does not have any oversight of UDOT but they prioritize the projects and decide how funds are spent. He explained how the Commission works with UDOT, UTA, the Legislature and local officials.

Mr. Adams explained that transportation funding is divided into two categories: roads are funded by the gas tax and public transit is funded by sales tax. He said the last gas tax increase was in 1997; the same 24-1/2 cents is being collected today as was in 1998 with no inflationary adjustment. The commission has need for additional revenue because the inflationary cost of doing business has increased but we have a conservative constituency when it comes to funding issues and not raising taxes. There are more miles being driven than were driven in 1997 and thus more need for road maintenance. This creates a dilemma as far as road funding in the state.

Mr. Adams discussed the Centennial Highway Fund that was set up by the legislature in the late 90s. Many projects have been funded through the sales tax from this fund, such as the Legacy

Highway in Davis County. He also explained that the legislature has set up the Transportation Investment Fund where a percentage of the sales tax revenue is added to address the funding dilemma. He discussed various projects funded under the Transportation Investment Fund. He indicated that federal funding for transportation has declined and continues to decline and that with current projects 70% - 75% is funded by the state.

**Carlos Braceras**, Department of Transportation Deputy Director, gave a snapshot of the funding that came out of the last legislative session. He commented that Utah is the third fastest growing state in the country in terms of people and has the strongest economy in the country. However, he noted that the vehicle miles traveled (which is how the department measures) is increasing at about twice the rate of our population. He discussed some of the challenges we face. There are 500 bridges in Utah that are going to need to be replaced. With the money that is available we replace about 15 bridges a year. There is also a need for repaving. We did a massive paving program right before the Olympics and there is a need for resurfacing.

Mr. Braceras indicated that the level of support transportation receives from the Governor and the Legislature is truly unprecedented. UDOT does a survey every year and 72% of the respondents said they are doing a good job. He discussed how UDOT has reorganized to do their jobs more effectively; over 80% of their design work is done by consultants. There will be over 200 projects under construction with a lot more projects in the pipeline. Mr. Braceras also discussed some innovative ways they have completed recent projects.

**Ralph Jackson**, Utah Transit Authority Deputy Chief, explained where UTA funding for projects comes from. He remarked that they work with other agencies such as UDOT. He discussed the funding for the Front Runner project which comes from sales tax and some federal funding. Mr. Jackson commented on various transit projects underway.

The Utah Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) wishes to thank our panelists for sharing their time and knowledge with us concerning transportation issues in our state.



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