

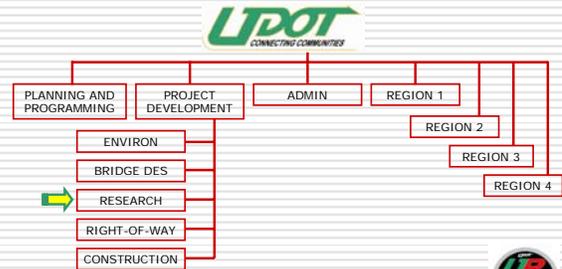
UDOT RESEARCH PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

BLAINE LEONARD, P.E.
UDOT RESEARCH PROGRAM MANAGER



MICHIGAN DOT RESEARCH PEER EXCHANGE
DECEMBER 4, 2007

PROGRAM OVERVIEW



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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- MAJOR FUNCTIONS:
 - RESEARCH PROJECTS . . .
 - PRODUCT EVALUATION
 - NEW PRODUCTS
 - EXPERIMENTAL FEATURES
 - TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER
 - TRAINING
 - WHITE PAPERS / INQUIRIES
 - LIBRARY SERVICES

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- RESEARCH PROJECT FUNCTIONS:
 - PROJECT IDENTIFICATION
 - SOLICITATION
 - PRIORITIZATION
 - SELECTION
 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT
 - PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION



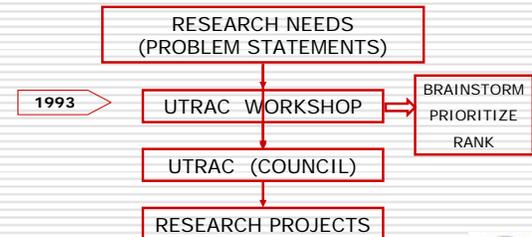
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UTRAC

- UTAH TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL
 - INITIATED MANY YEARS AGO (1980's ?)
 - ORIGINALLY A COUNCIL OF MID-MANAGERS FROM ACROSS THE DEPT
 - COUNCIL SELECTED PROJECTS
 - ANNUAL SELECTION PROCESS

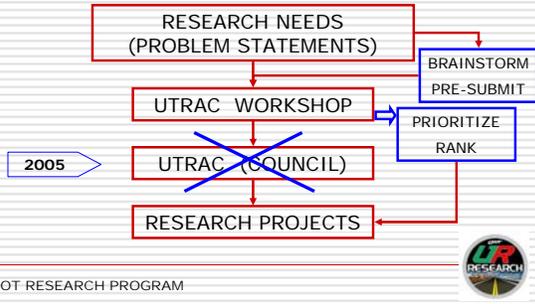
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UTRAC



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UTRAC



UTRAC PROCESS CHANGES

- ❑ PRE-SUBMIT STATEMENTS
 - SPECIFIED FORM
 - ANYONE CAN SUBMIT
 - ADVANCE REVIEW BY RESEARCH STAFF

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UTRAC PROCESS CHANGES

- ❑ PRE-SUBMIT STATEMENTS
- ❑ EXPAND THE DISCIPLINE GROUPS
 - 60 – 80 PROBLEM STATEMENTS
 - 130 – 150 PEOPLE

STRUCT / GEO
ENVIRO / HYDR
TRAFFIC / PLANNING
CONSTRUCT / MAINT
MATERIALS



STRUCTURES
GEOTECH
ENVIRONMENTAL
HYDRAULICS
TRAFFIC
CONSTRUCTION
MATERIALS
MAINTENANCE
PLANNING

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UTRAC PROCESS CHANGES

- ❑ PRE-SUBMIT STATEMENTS
- ❑ EXPAND THE DISCIPLINE GROUPS
- ❑ MODIFY THE VOTING
 - SECRET BALLOT
 - WEIGHTED PRIORITIES
 - ❑ % OF VOTE ALLOCATED TO: UDOT
 - UNIVERSITIES
 - CONSULTANTS
 - FHWA

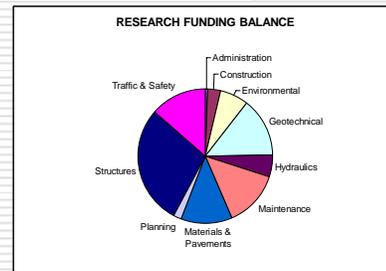
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UTRAC PROCESS CHANGES

- ❑ PRE-SUBMIT STATEMENTS
- ❑ EXPAND THE DISCIPLINE GROUPS
- ❑ MODIFY THE VOTING
- ❑ ELIMINATE THE COUNCIL
 - PRIORITIES DON'T GET RE-PRIORITIZED
 - COMMIT TO FUNDING EACH GROUP'S HIGHEST PRIORITY

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MORE EVEN DISTRIBUTION



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WHY CHANGE THE PROCESS?

- ❑ OBSERVED PROBLEMS
 - TOO MANY "PROBLEM STATEMENTS"
 - STATEMENTS NOT WELL THOUGHT OUT
 - VOTING WITHOUT INFORMATION
 - OPEN VOTING WAS BIASED
 - GROUPS TOO BROAD
 - PRIORITIZED PROJECTS WERE BEING RE-PRIORITIZED BY OTHERS

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WHY CHANGE THE PROCESS?

- ❑ OBSERVED PROBLEMS
- ❑ UTRAC EVALUATION FORMS
 - COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE PROCESS

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WHY CHANGE THE PROCESS?

- ❑ OBSERVED PROBLEMS
- ❑ UTRAC EVALUATION FORMS
- ❑ EVALUATION OF "SUCCESS"
 - RESEARCH RETREAT
 - WHAT IS A "SUCCESSFUL" PROJECT?
 - WHAT CAN WE DO TO PRODUCE MORE "SUCCESSFUL" PROJECTS?
 - WHO ARE OUR CUSTOMERS?
 - WHAT DO OUR CUSTOMERS EXPECT?

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SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

- ❑ DEFINITION:
 - SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS ARE IMPLEMENTED
- ❑ NOTE:
 - WE DON'T EXPECT EVERY PROJECT TO BE SUCCESSFUL
 - WE WANT TO INCREASE THE NUMBER THAT ARE

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SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS

- ❑ FULFILL A NEED
- ❑ HAVE A STRONG CHAMPION
 - STRONG PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI)
 - STRONG PROJECT MANAGER (PM)
 - STRONG TECH. ADVISORY COMM (TAC)

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STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

- ❑ CHANGE THE PROCESS TO BETTER ASSESS THE NEED
- ❑ BE MORE PROACTIVE IN GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED
- ❑ INVOLVE THE STAKEHOLDERS
 - LISTEN TO FEEDBACK
 - GET THEM IN A ROOM TOGETHER
- ❑ EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS OF CHANGE

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OBSTACLES

- TRADITION
 - "WE HAVE ALWAYS DONE IT THIS WAY"
 - OWNERSHIP

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CHANGE

- The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

- If you always do what you always did, you always get what you always got.

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OBSTACLES

- TRADITION
- LOTS OF EFFORT
- TAKES TIME (DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT)
 - RETREAT: 2003
 - UTRAC PROCESS ASSESSMENT: 2004
 - UTRAC PROCESS CHANGES: 2005
 - UTRAC PROCESS TWEAKS: 2006 – 2007
 - REFINEMENTS: PENDING

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BENEFITS

- BETTER PROJECTS
 - PROBLEM STATEMENTS MORE DEVELOPED
 - MORE TIME FOR GROUPS TO FOCUS
 - MORE INFORMED VOTING
- BETTER "BUY-IN"
 - RESULTING FROM BETTER VOTING
- BROADER (MORE FAIR) DISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES
 - ALSO RESULTS IN BETTER "BUY-IN"

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BENEFITS

- MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF RESOURCES
 - DON'T DO PROJECTS PEOPLE DON'T REALLY WANT
- MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED
 - PAST ATTENDANCE: 80 - 100
 - RECENT ATTENDANCE: 130 – 150

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RESULTS / OUTCOMES

- DO WE HAVE MORE IMPLEMENTED /IMPLEMENTABLE PROJECTS ?

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CHALLENGES STILL EXIST

- ❑ CHAMPIONS AREN'T AS COMMITTED AS WE HAD HOPED
 - 'LET RESEARCH DO IT'
 - TURNOVER
- ❑ SECOND-GUESSING
 - PRIORITIZED – BUT NOW AREN'T SURE
 - ADDING PROJECTS LATER

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WILL WE EVER GET IT RIGHT?

"A man has to know his limitations"
– Dirty Harry

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MORE CHANGES COMING . . .

- ❑ HOW TO COMMIT CHAMPIONS?
- ❑ IS THE PRIORITIZATION NOT WORKING?
- ❑ ARE WE MISSING THE BIG PICTURE?
 - UDOT STRATEGIC PLAN
 - SPECIFIC INITIATIVES ("ABC")

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MORE CHANGES COMING . . . (NOT RELATED TO UTRAC PROCESS)

- ❑ CUSTOMER SURVEY
- ❑ OUTREACH TO CUSTOMERS
 - VISIT THE REGIONS
 - IMPROVE OUR "LOOK AND FEEL"
- ❑ OUTREACH TO OUR PARTNERS
 - MEET WITH DEPT. HEADS ANNUALLY
 - SEEK THEIR INPUT AND COMMENT

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QUESTIONS???



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