

August 4, 2025

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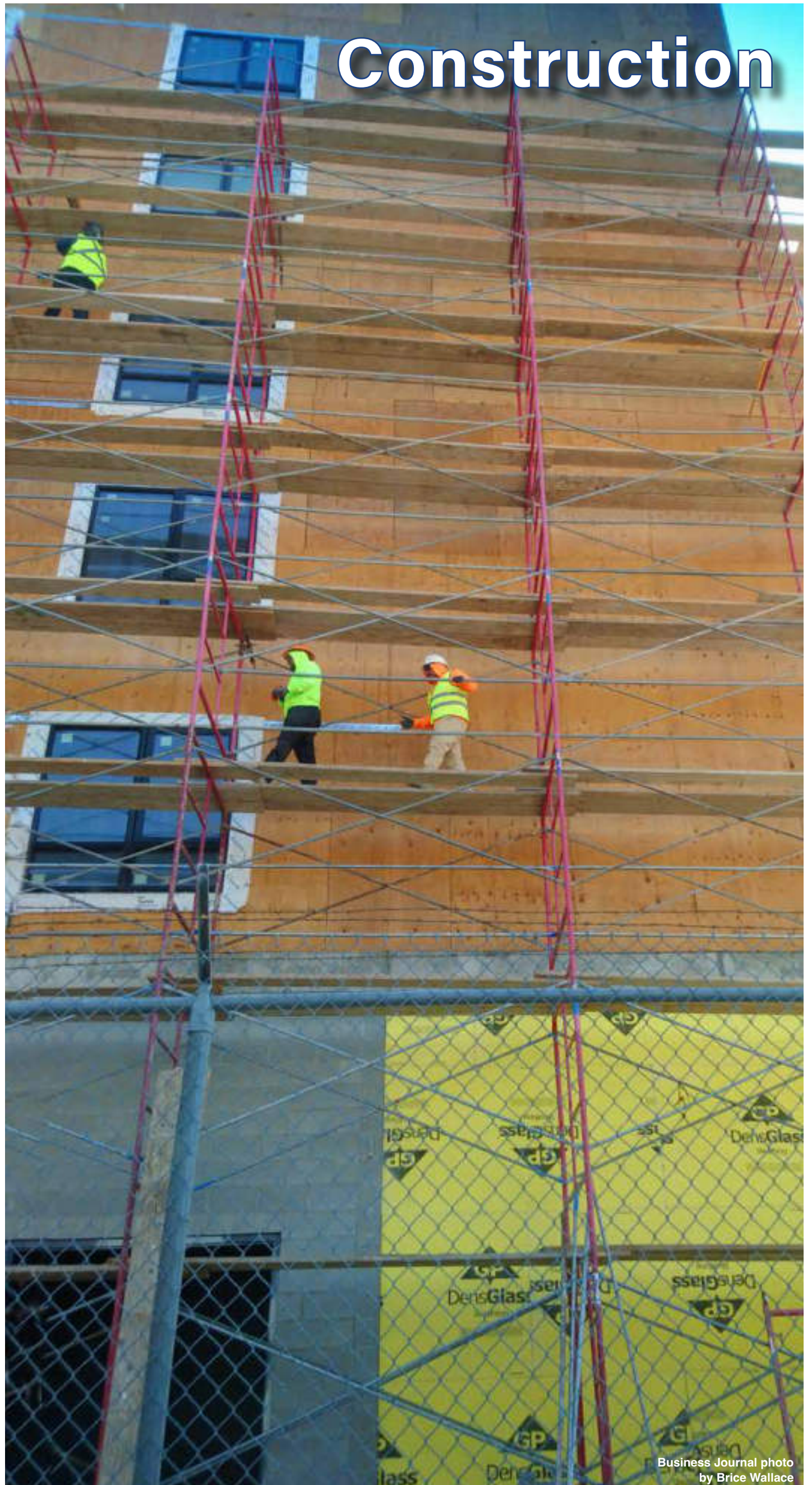
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## When ICE comes knocking

**Brice Wallace**

*Salt Lake Business Journal*

A few years back, it seemed that construction companies' biggest regulatory fear was OSHA stopping by for an inspection. But Occupational Safety and Health Administration worries seemingly have been surpassed by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as ICE raids at or near businesses has been a hallmark of the first half-year of the second President Trump administration.

Experts believe that construction — along with agriculture and hospitality — are the industries most susceptible to immigration enforcement.

"I don't know if some of you have experienced this yet, but there seems to be a real emphasis from this administration regarding immigration and regarding crackdowns on people who are not documented to work here, particularly punishing employers who hire these types of people," Sean Monson, employment and labor practice area co-chairperson at law firm Parsons Behle & Latimer, told the audience this spring at the firm's Employment Law Symposium in Salt Lake City.

ICE certainly has been busy during the second Trump term. It announced in late April that it had arrested 66,463 illegal aliens and removed 65,682 from the country during the first 100 days of the second term. CBS News recently reported that ICE is holding 59,000 immigrant detainees, with

nearly half having no criminal record.

In late June, The New York Times reported that ICE had daily arrests of 9.7 Utahns, on average, during the second term, up 215 percent from the same period in 2024.

Many Trump supporters believe the president is fulfilling a campaign vow to crack down on illegal immigration. But some say he's not, as promised, going after "the worst of the worst," meaning those who have committed serious crimes, but instead has focused on hard-working immigrants who have been crime-free since entering the U.S.

Among the highest-profile raids have been those in California, including at Home Depot parking lots, which had long been a gathering location for day laborers. At least eight people were arrested earlier this month at a Home Depot parking lot in Sacramento County.

### The correct response

At the PBL symposium and other events, Monson and others in Utah have been advising company owners and executives about what to do when ICE comes knocking at their doors.

"Let's all take a deep breath," was the first suggestion from Timothy Wheelwright, partner and chair of the immigration law group at Denton Durham Jones and Pinegar. He was speaking to a crowd in the early days of the second Trump term at an event hosted by the Park City Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, in partnership with the Wasatch Immigration Project, Park City Community Foun-

dation, American Business Immigration Coalition and the Heber Valley Chamber of Commerce.

"It'll be OK," he cautioned "We'll get through this."

The main response to the current environment, experts say, is having a plan. For at least three decades, high-profile immigration raids were rare, but the situation is different now, Wheelwright said. "Look, you have to be prepared because we will see more raids in future," he told the crowd.

"Make a plan, now, of what you're going to do if this happens, because you don't want to be making decisions in the heat of the moment, where you are extremely stressed, your employees are extremely stressed," Monson said.

"What you want to have, if you have workers that this might apply to or this might come up, you make a plan in advance: 'This is what we're going to do, we're going to do 'X, Y and Z,' this is how we're going to respond,' so that you have a plan to follow in a very, very stressful situation."

Wheelwright said a plan can be 50 pages or five paragraphs — the length is not important — and should be written because it's the easiest way to communicate its provisions.

"Because in the moment, in the moment when they're standing in front of you, it's going to be really hard to remember some of those things," he said. A receptionist can pull the plan from a desk and go down its checklist of what to say and what to do.

Monson stressed that a reception-

ist will be the point person during the early stages of an enforcement action. But their reaction can be as simple as having that receptionist tell ICE, "Our company policy is to call our lawyer, and I am doing that now."

### Potential impacts

Companies' preparations also should spell out communications plans in the event of a raid, including what to say if word of the event hits the press and what to tell news media, employees and stakeholders. Companies also should understand what fines and other financial consequences they might face if they lose so many workers that they cannot complete their contracts with customers.

At the Park City event, Enrique Sanchez, Intermountain state director of the American Business Immigration Coalition, said early second-term raids were instilling fear in the Park City community and across the country, leading some people to change their daily lives to the point that they would not go shopping or to church services.

"Fear is real," said Maggie Abu-Haidar, a co-founder, executive director and volunteer attorney with the Wasatch Immigration Project. "It's based on real concerns and it's not only impacting our businesses ... but it's impacting the ability for folks to go to work but also to health care, to go shopping for food, to take their kids to school."

see ICE page F7

# Phase 1 funding acquired for The Point development

**Tom Haralden**

*Salt Lake Business Journal*

The project has been discussed for years, property has been secured and remnants of the previous Utah State Prison have been removed. Now, funding for the first phase for development of The Point in Draper is in place.

It's money for construction of streetscapes, landscaping, utilities and parking for a new 5,000-seat event center to be built on the site. The Point Partners — a joint venture among Lincoln Property Co., Colmena Group and Wadsworth Development Group — has closed on a \$250 million special revenue bond.

In a release from Lincoln Property, the bond will be used for development of the first 35 acres of the 600-acre site, with a focus on housing. The plan for The Point includes residential, retail, entertainment, office and hospitality venues once fully developed.

“The issuance of these bonds is a big milestone for the project, as it will

enable the PID (public infrastructure district) to begin work on the key infrastructure and public spaces that will make The Point one of the most vibrant and accessible mixed-use communities in the country,” Patrick Gilligan, senior executive vice president at Lincoln Property, said in a release. “This major investment into public infrastructure will not only benefit those that live and work here, but will create a destination where all Utahns can gather to enjoy arts, entertainment, and shared public spaces.”

“The Point of the Mountain will generate spending, support jobs, and produce tax revenue that wouldn't otherwise exist in Utah. The innovation district will attract high-paying companies and support job growth, while the entertainment venue will address a gap in Utah's music and entertainment market by attracting new acts and visitors to the state,” said Benj Becker, head of the special district group for Piper Sandler in Utah.

The arena will host concerts, sporting events, conferences, community



Artist rendering of a planned portion at The Point. (Courtesy of The Point Partners)

celebrations and more, with plans to hold over 100 events annually on the site. The former state prison location is part of a 15-year, \$3 billion project focused on what developers call a “dynamic walkable community.”

The Point Partners were selected in 2022 by the state of Utah as its partner for Phase 1 of The Point, which in

its entirety will span 99 acres, including the 100,000-square-foot entertainment venue, 2 million square feet of office space, over 3,000 multifamily units, 450,000 square feet of retail and other entertainment offerings, 380,000 square feet of hospitality space, and 16 acres of open space with walking trails and public parks.

## Utah ranked as the 2024's ninth-most-expensive housing market

In 2024, Utah continued to endure high but stable housing costs, according to the 2024-25 edition of the “State of the State's Housing Market” report, an annual update from the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah.

The report found Utah ranked as the country's ninth-most-expensive housing market in 2024. However, stable prices — also a characteristic of the state's market — offered little relief to potential homebuyers as high interest rates combined with elevated housing prices to exclude many households from homeownership.

“Utah housing prices and rents showed little to no growth in 2024,” said Jim Wood, Ivory-Boyer senior fellow at the Gardner Institute and lead author of the report. “Home sales and listings increased, and residential construction declined as apartment developments tumbled. Slower economic growth presented challenges for Utah's homebuilding and real estate industries but helped to dampen price increases for potential homebuyers.”

Home prices in Utah have increased less than 1 percent since 2022; however, the state still ranks among the country's most expensive housing markets. The median sales price of a single-family home statewide was \$547,700 in the fourth quarter of 2024, according to the study.

Rental rates also showed little change in 2024 and declined in some submarkets. The average rental rate (composite

of all unit types) in Salt Lake County increased from \$1,582 in 2023 to \$1,593 in 2024, less than a 1 percent increase.

The study cited the “median multiple ratio,” which measures the severity of housing affordability by dividing the median sales price of a home by the median household income. The 2024 median multiple ratios show Washington and Salt Lake counties as severely unaffordable (with ratios above 5.1) and Weber, Davis and Utah counties as seriously unaffordable (with ratios between 4.1 and 5.0).

High-density units (condominiums, townhomes and twin homes) accounted for 28 percent of all existing residential sales and 28 percent of residential construction in 2024. Statewide, the median sales price of a condominium in 2024 (\$409,900) was 27 percent below the median price of a single-family home.

Eagle Mountain issued building permits for 1,556 residential units in 2024, the highest level of any Utah city. The second-ranked city, Saratoga Springs, issued permits for 1,354 units, and the fifth-ranked city, Lehi, issued permits for 1,036 units. These three northern Utah County cities accounted for 18 percent of the residential units receiving building permits statewide in 2024.

The report also found that a larger number of sellers entered Utah's market in 2024 as average monthly listings returned to pre-COVID levels (8,000 to 9,000 active listings). Home sales also received a boost from cash buyers who were not deterred by high

mortgage rates. Nearly 18 percent of all home sales in Utah were cash purchases in 2024 (6,724 homes). Sales statewide reached 37,641 homes, up 7 percent in 2024.

Looking ahead, economic uncertainty and slower rates of demographic and economic growth will hinder housing demand in 2025, according to study authors. Residential construction, existing home sales, housing prices and mortgage rates will con-

tinue at near the same levels as 2024. Projections include approximately 23,000 new residential units, 36,900 sales of existing homes, a 2 percent increase in the median sales price of a home, and mortgage rates fluctuating in a narrow range of 6 percent to 7 percent.

The full report is now available at <https://d36oiwf74r1rap.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/State-Of-State-Housing-Jul2025.pdf>.

Table 1: Median Sales Price of Utah Homes, 2014-2024

	Single-family	Condominiums, Townhomes, Twin Homes	Total All Types	Percent Change
2014	\$229,680	\$166,500	\$215,000	4.4%
2015	\$245,000	\$175,000	\$229,000	11.1%
2016	\$265,000	\$189,000	\$247,400	8.0%
2017	\$290,000	\$210,000	\$269,000	8.7%
2018	\$321,900	\$235,000	\$299,000	11.1%
2019	\$347,000	\$256,000	\$320,000	7.0%
2020	\$386,778	\$282,000	\$355,000	10.9%
2021	\$486,017	\$359,629	\$446,000	25.6%
2022	\$560,000	\$415,000	\$510,000	14.4%
2023	\$540,000	\$398,000	\$489,000	-4.1%
2024	\$564,000	\$409,990	\$506,500	3.6%
AARC* 2014 to 2024	9.4%	9.4%	8.9%	-

\*Average annual rate of change.  
Source: UtahRealEstate.com



# Designing the Future of Utah

Establishing its Utah presence in 2010, award-winning architecture firm AO has helped shape the state's built environment for over 15 years. With a reputation for design excellence, a collaborative approach, and a deep understanding of development goals, AO delivers dynamic projects that blend innovation, functionality, and lasting value.

AO offers a comprehensive suite of integrated services—including architecture, planning, landscape, and interiors—positioning the firm as a true one-stop partner for developers, investors, and business owners. Focused on lasting relationships, AO tailors solutions to meet each client's unique goals, helping create spaces where communities and businesses thrive. The firm's portfolio spans the full spectrum of residential and commercial real estate, including multifamily, retail, hospitality, mixed-use, restaurants, office, science and technology, data centers, healthcare, industrial, parking, global design, modular, surf and sport, and more.



Mountain View Village, Riverton, UT. Developer: CenterCal Properties



Above: Mountain View Village Market Hall, Riverton, UT. Below: COMPASS, Sandy, UT. Developer: The Boyer Company & Gardner Group

## MULTIFAMILY EXPERTISE IN UTAH

AO's contribution to Utah's residential market is marked by the delivery of more than 860 apartment units to date, with several high-impact projects in the pipeline including:

- **Millhaus**, Millcreek, UT: Currently under construction, this mixed-use apartment project is slated for completion in October 2025.
- **COMPASS**, Sandy, UT: This fully entitled mixed-use development includes 280 apartments, co-op work space, public plaza and amenities.
- **Elliott**, Salt Lake City, UT: A 328-unit mixed-use project blending bold design and community living for the next wave of urban professionals.
- **District North**, Salt Lake City, UT: Recently approved by the City, this project will comprise 350 apartments blending timeless urban living and modern convenience.



Millhaus, Millcreek, UT. Developer: The Boyer Company

AO collaborates with a distinguished roster of clients and partners in the Utah region, including esteemed firms like **Boyer Company**, **CenterCal Properties**, **Dakota Pacific Real Estate**, **Elevated Property Company**, **Salt Lake City International Airport**, **Sunwell Communities**, **Gardner Group**, **Wasatch Residential Group**, and **Asana Partners**.

## COMMERCIAL EXPERTISE IN UTAH

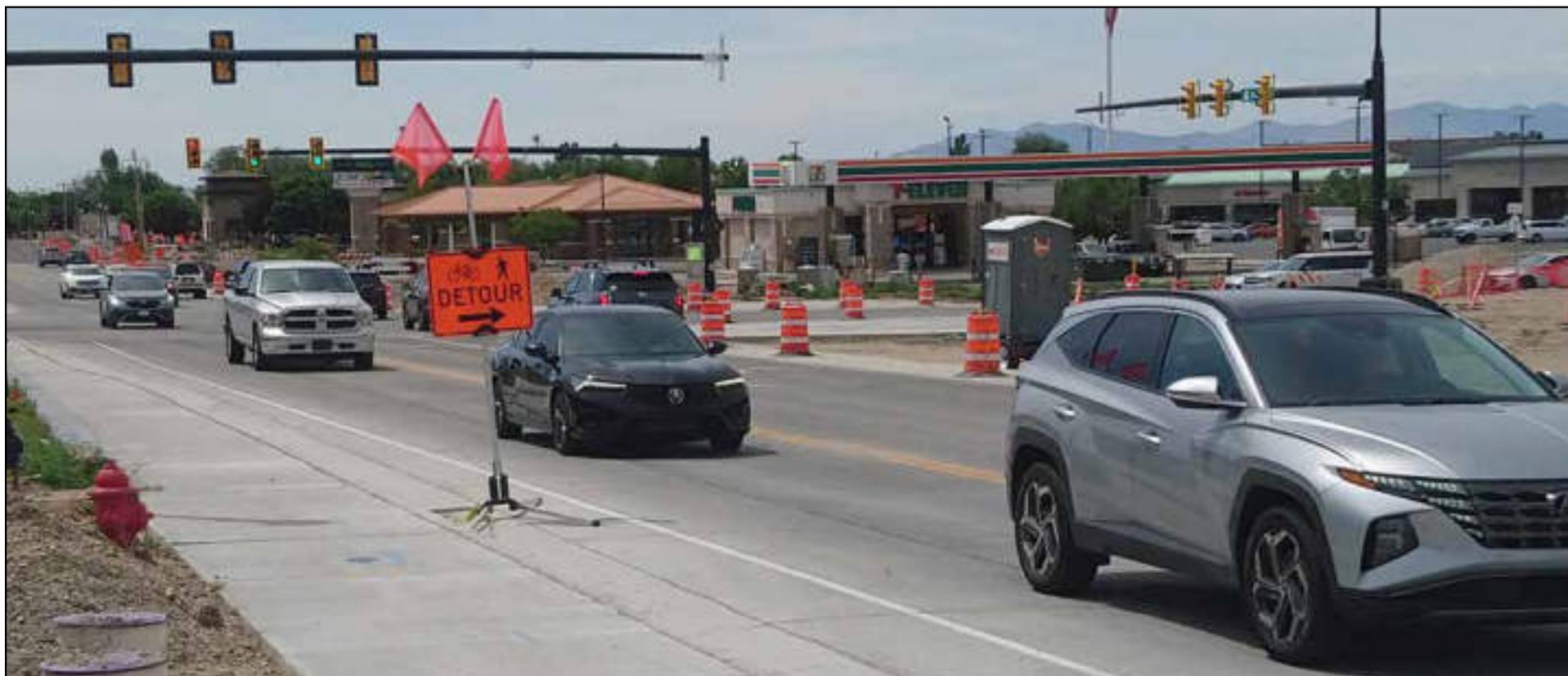
AO's commercial portfolio in Utah showcases the firm's versatility and commitment to enhancing the state's economic landscape across various sectors. Some of the firm's recent commercial projects include:

- **Mountain View Village**, Riverton, UT: A two-phased development in one of the nation's fastest-growing submarkets, Mountain View Village offers a dynamic mix of retail, dining, and entertainment that has become a popular gathering place in the South Valley.
- **Pierpont Remodel**, Salt Lake City, UT: AO revitalized a historic two-story mixed-use building through façade preservation, tenant improvements, and landscape design, blending old and new.
- **El Cholo Restaurant**, Salt Lake City, UT: As Architect of Record, AO delivered an inviting dining space for the iconic El Cholo brand, balancing functionality with character.
- **Foothill Village**, Salt Lake City, UT: AO transformed this aging two-story shopping center through comprehensive remodeling, including a new parking structure and upgraded landscape and hardscape.
- **Amazon Delivery Stations**: AO designed logistics facilities in North Salt Lake City and West Jordan that meet Amazon's high-performance standards for modern delivery operations.
- **Bear Lake**, Garden City, UT: This 105-acre resort features nearly 500 glamping sites and over 33,000 square feet of amenities, including a village-style main street, poolside bar, and community support facilities designed for elevated outdoor hospitality.

**With a client-first approach and expertise across numerous sectors, AO provides a seamless, one-stop solution for developers.** Offering comprehensive services, from planning and entitlement to design and execution, AO eliminates the need for multiple design teams. This interdisciplinary approach ensures efficiency and consistency across all project phases. The firm's work in Utah reflects a commitment to innovation, sustainability, and enhancing community connectivity.

As Utah's rapid growth continues, AO remains at the forefront, shaping the state's architectural landscape. Whether designing dynamic residential communities or revitalizing commercial spaces, AO is a trusted partner in driving Utah's urban and economic expansion.

For more information visit [aoarchitects.com](http://aoarchitects.com).



Traffic navigates a road construction zone in Clinton. A recent assessment by a civil engineers association gave Utah roads a B-plus grade, the highest in the Utah infrastructure report card. (Brice Wallace/Salt Lake Business Journal)

## Report: Utah infrastructure needs funding for improvement

**Brice Wallace**  
Salt Lake Business Journal

Infrastructure is never a sexy topic, but its many forms are necessary for human life in a civilized society and the needs are more acute in a growing environment.

If recommendations from an engineering group become reality, Utah could see renovations of everything from dams to drinking water for decades to come.

The Utah section of the American Society of Civil Engineers this spring evaluated the state's infrastructure, calling for improvement to match the state's ballooning population.

The infrastructure report card, released every four years, gave Utah an overall C-plus grade, unchanged from 2020. The new state report followed a national report card released that also gave Utah a C-plus grade, a notch above the national C grade, and the highest among states. Only Utah, Georgia and Wisconsin earned C-plus grades. The national report card's C grade for the U.S. is the highest grade since the report card series started in 1998.

The state report notes that Utah's population is projected to double by 2060 as people are lured to the state by economic opportunities and outdoor recreation options for skiing, five national parks, hiking and biking. "These factors contribute to population and economic growth, which relies on quality infrastructure to maintain a high quality of life," the report states.

While state, federal and local agencies have been investing in Utah's infrastructure, "the gap between infrastructure needs and available funding continues to grow," it says.

The Utah organization stressed the "continued need for resilient, reliable and innovative infrastructure to ben-

efit all Utahns."

"Reliable infrastructure is a backbone of Utah's economy," Lingkun Li, president of the Utah section, said in announcing the report findings. "When our infrastructure is working, it is typically out of sight and out of mind."

But Utah infrastructure troubles can have major consequences to public health, safety and welfare and can jeopardize economic growth, "and we need to do everything possible to prevent future disruptions," he said.

Of the categories assessed, aviation (C-plus) was the only one to show improvement from 2020's C grade, thanks mostly to improvements at Salt Lake City International Airport.

However, the report said, "it is important to not neglect the needs of the smaller commercial airports and general aviation airports that serve the more remote areas of the state. The gap is increasing between necessary expenditures for maintaining and improving the state's network of airports and available funding. This will soon need to be addressed to maintain safety and resilience throughout the system."

Other Utah infrastructure areas in the report include:

- Roads, B-plus. Ninety-five percent of Utah roads are in good or fair condition, mostly due to recent funding and intensive planning. "Utah is consistently adding capacity to the roadway network and promotes an 'all users' mindset to provide a safer, more equitable system for everyone that uses a road," it says.
- Bridges, B, down from B-plus in 2020. The state has 3,125 bridges, and "state and local agencies in Utah have demonstrated that funds allocated for the preservation, rehabilitation, and replacement of bridges are thoughtfully and judiciously spent," according to the report. But a funding shortfall has con-

tributed to a 44 percent increase in poor-condition bridges from 2020 to 2024. During that time, Utah bridges in good condition also decreased by over 40 percent and those in fair condition increased more than 25 percent.

If the state does not quicken its bridge construction, it would take more than a century at the current pace to replace all existing bridges in Utah.

- Transit, B-minus, far ahead of the national's D grade but below Utah's B-plus of 2020.

Utah's eight transit agencies provide access to 95 percent of the state population, the highest rate in the nation. "Utah can continue to improve public transit by giving more support to rural transit providers, updating or replacing seismically deficient facilities, and continuing to plan for future growth," the report says.

- Drinking water: B-minus, as most of the state's pipelines are more than 50 years old "and nearing the end of its design life."

"With the population projected to increase by 66 percent by 2060, the strain on water supply and infrastructure will intensify," it says, adding that earthquakes pose a major threat and both urban and agricultural users must cut consumption to support restorative flows to the shrinking Great Salt Lake.

- Wastewater systems: C, with a need to expand to meet expected demand over the next 40 years. Municipal wastewater treatment plants in Utah generally are meeting required technology limits but "a growing number of systems are at risk of exceeding their design life and/or design capacity" and have been unable to keep up with repairs and replacements.
- Levees, D-minus. Utah has nearly 100 miles of levees, with most

at least 60 years old, "but current funding for improving levees is very limited" and "Utah's levee infrastructure is rapidly reaching a point of failure in sections of our highly urbanized areas."

- Canals, D-plus, with most built in the 1800s. "Canals serve as lifelines for water distribution across diverse landscapes, necessitating robust oversight and preventative measures to ensure water quality and system integrity," the report says. "While state leadership maintains an inventory of Utah's canals, the condition or risk of private entities remains largely unknown, namely risks from extreme weather or events."
- Dams, C-plus. The state has 870 dams and the report calls for innovative efforts related to maintaining, rehabilitating and constructing dams. Dams typically have a life of 50 to 100 years, but the average age of Utah dams is 64 years. Rehabilitating all dams could take 50 years.
- Hazardous waste, C-plus. The report suggested nine actions for improving the state's hazardous waste management.
- Solid waste, B-minus. While currently "well-positioned" to manage solid waste, the state has room to improve, according to the report. A solid waste master plan has not been updated in almost 20 years and recycling rates are below the national average.
- Stormwater, C. "Utah's stormwater management systems face increasing strain due to rapid development and more frequent high-intensity storms," the report says. It calls for continued investment and updated infrastructure in order to reduce flooding risks and ensure water quality across the state.

The full report is available at <https://infrastructurereportcard.org/state-item/utah/>.

## ICE

from page 3

Targeted ICE actions and broad sweeps of people without criminal records are “causing a lot of people and employers to fear that their workforce is potentially going to dwindle down even further, even after every single sector is already experiencing a labor shortage,” Sanchez said.

### Prep work

Experts also stress that companies become familiar with the immigration enforcement process and understand their rights, and those of their employees, during such events.

For example, without a warrant, ICE agents can mill around the parking lot or enter a company’s lobby or other public areas. But to enter private areas, like those reserved for employees, they need a judicial warrant or administrative warrant. Companies also can grant consent to those private spaces.

Wheelwright said agents will always try to gain consent, “including making you feel like you’ll be in trouble if you don’t cooperate.”

### Warrants

Issued by a judge, a judicial warrant will spell out locations in the business that can be searched and describe items that can be seized by ICE. An administrative warrant, from a government official, spells out the information and documents that can be taken, often related to an I-9 audit.

“Certainly, try to be welcoming and not be standoffish, but in a way that keeps everything under control so we can manage the process,” said Chris Lampey, vice president of human resources at Deer Valley Resort.

Among actions ICE agents can undertake under the terms of the warrants are shutting down equipment and moving employees to a certain area for questioning. Companies should write down the name of the presiding officer and have a representative — or their legal counsel — follow the agents’ movements, even shooting video. Companies should provide access to locked areas and provide copies of documents the agents seek, being sure to log what is taken and asking for a list of items seized during a search. Companies can object to a search outside the scope of the warrant but should not debate or argue with the agents about it.

Company representatives should not give any statements to ICE or allow themselves to be interrogated before consulting with an attorney. Employees may choose whether to talk to ICE agents during a raid, but companies should not direct them to refuse to speak to agents when questioned.

Do not, experts say, ever provide false or misleading information. And company representatives should avoid blocking or interfering with agents’ activities, if it’s listed in the warrant. “That’s not to say you can’t hold their feet to the fire within the scope of the search war-

rant,” Monson said, “But if they go outside the scope of the search warrant, you can object.”

Companies also can get into hot water by hiding employees or telling them to leave, either during a raid or even before if they get wind that a raid is imminent. “That’s a bad idea, right? That’s just a real bad idea,” Monson said. “That’s going to get you in trouble if you tell your employees and your sister employees how to escape or to leave when ICE comes knocking at your door.”

### Knowing rights

Many problems can be avoided by having properly completed I-9 forms for every employee, experts say. That, and knowing their rights, can help companies overcome government strategies designed to instill fear and confusion. For example, employees do not have to speak to ICE agents.

“We should all just kind of stand up for our businesses and say, ‘Hey, wait a second. We have rights, too,’” Wheelwright said. “Even all of our employees have rights and those rights need to be respected.”

Even undocumented people have rights, he noted. The U.S. has many laws that are intended to protect U.S. citizens, permanent residents, asylees and refugees that have permanent status in the country.

“There is no right to exploit,” he said of some employers. “There’s plenty of them out there that are taking advantage of this population and it’s sickening, what they’re doing.

And that includes those who are here legally, who are coming here under temporary work visas. . . . There’s definitely protection against exploitation of any human being.”

Wheelwright also suspects that in addition to high-profile raids by ICE, companies can expect to see more inspections of I-9 forms and perhaps a broadening of enforcement actions and investigations by state and local law enforcement.

### A new type of chaos

Michael Judd, a shareholder at Parsons Behle & Latimer, said immigration enforcement actions were just one of “what has been a very, very hot, active start to this administration, that touches almost every area of society and it certainly touches employers and HR.”

He noted that one comedian has described Trump’s presidential actions as being chaotic and akin to “a horse in a hospital.”

“I think to a certain degree, I think it’s very fair to say that for HR folks, for employment lawyers, every change of political administration brings chaos. We were saying this 20 years ago,” Judd said. But the chaos then was with a lowercase “c,” while now it sports a capital letter, he added.

“The speed and the severity with which changes are happening in this new administration is a new thing,” he said. “It’s like a horse loose in a hospital, and nobody is quite sure of what’s going to happen or how to proceed with it.”

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# 2025 finds UDOT directing \$1.68 billion in new and ongoing transportation construction projects across state

**John Rogers**

*Salt Lake Business Journal*

Earlier this year, the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) unveiled an expansive slate of 2025 construction initiatives totaling nearly \$1.68 billion, with plans to kick off 152 projects and continue 145 others aimed at enhancing safety, mobility and multimodal connectivity across the state.

“Every day, Utahns are out driving to work, picking up kids, heading to the mountains or just getting where they need to go,” said UDOT Deputy Director Lisa Wilson. “Our job is to make sure those trips are as safe and smooth as possible. These projects might cause some short-term delays, but in the long run, they’ll mean better roads, less congestion and a safer and more reliable way to get around — no matter how you travel.”

UDOT urged drivers to plan ahead, obey work-zone speed limits and anticipate shifting traffic patterns during the busy build season.

## New Priority Projects Underway

### • 1800 North/I-15 Interchange — Davis County (\$385 million).

In Clearfield, work began in March to build a new interchange, widen 1800 North to 2000 West, and construct an overpass at 500 West to span the railroad. Additional ground-work will prepare for a future Hill Air Force Base gate. Completion is expected in fall 2027.

### • I-84 Bridges in Weber Canyon — Morgan County (\$52 million).

The project replaces two aging bridges over the Weber River and Union Pacific Railroad. A new eastbound bridge will be built to reroute traffic before replacing the westbound span. Construction is set to last two years.

### • I-215 Resurfacing — Salt Lake County (\$190 million).

Crews will repave three miles of I-215, 14 miles of associated ramps and 22 bridges between SR-201 and North Temple. A modern drainage system will extend pavement life by an estimated 15 years. The project spans two years.

### • I-80/SR-36 Widening — Tooele County (\$38.4 million).

Work includes adding an eastbound auxiliary lane on I-80 and a new northbound lane on SR-36 north from Stansbury Park. The corridor enhancement is projected to conclude by summer 2026.

### • Geneva Road Expansion — Utah County (\$34.4 million).

Geneva Road will be widened to two travel lanes in each direction plus a center turn lane. New sidewalks, bike lanes and a 10-foot shared path will also be added. The project begins in summer and finishes by fall 2026.

### • US-189 Provo Canyon — Wasatch County (\$53.1 million).

Widening the highway to four lanes, creating a signalized intersection at SR-113 and enhancing day-use area access are central to the project, which includes wildlife protections. It is scheduled for late winter 2026 completion.

### • US-6 Chicken Hollow to Tie Fork — Utah County (\$59.9 million).

The plan expands from two to four lanes, adding acceleration/deceleration lanes and a center median. Improved drainage will point to an expected fall 2027 completion.

### • US-191 Passing Lanes — Duchesne County (North of Summit, \$30.75 million).

A two-mile passing lane, enhanced shoulders, chain-up zones, guardrails and fencing are among the improvements. Construction is active and set to conclude next year.

### • I-15 Climbing Lane — Iron County (\$90.3 million).

A long northbound climbing lane spans 13 miles from Kanarrville Rest Area to the South Cedar interchange. The project also widens to three lanes and installs a roundabout at Exit 51. It will wrap in December 2026.

## Ongoing Major Projects Continue Through 2026

### • 5600 South Mobility — Weber County (\$361 million).

The third phase includes reconstructing 5600 South and its I-15 interchange through Riverdale and Roy,



Contractors place huge retaining wall sections on an overpass project in Salt Lake County, part of an ongoing \$1.68 billion worth of road construction this year in Utah. (Photo courtesy UDOT)

concluding in summer 2026.

### • Bangerter Highway Interchanges — Salt Lake County (\$415.3 million).

Four new interchanges at 9800 South, 13400 South, 2700 West and 4700 South are underway to eliminate traffic signals, all due by year’s end.

### • Midvalley Express Bus Rapid Transit — Salt Lake County (\$104.1 million).

UTA, supported by UDOT, is starting a seven-mile all-electric BRT line featuring bus-only lanes, 15 stations and signal priority. Work will run through fall 2026.

### • Mountain View Corridor Extension — Utah County (\$466 million).

Four new miles of freeway connect Lehi’s 2100 North to Herriman’s Porter Rockwell Boulevard, with a new bridge at Redwood Road, wildlife fencing and a multi-use trail. Completion is slated for spring 2026.

### • SR-162 & SR-262 Enhancements — San Juan County (\$152 million).

Projects along the Energy Corridor include paving, fiber-optic cables, cattle guards and drainage upgrades, continuing into spring 2026.

## Statewide Overview: Network Build-Out and Preservation

UDOT’s 2025 portfolio reflects a coordinated approach to address both new infrastructure and maintenance of vital corridors. While major capacity upgrades feature prominently, repaving and drainage projects aim to extend roadway lifespans and improve ride quality.

The agency also continues efforts to build multimodal linkages, including trails and sidewalks alongside key corridors — including approaches to UTA rail and BRT lines — signaling a commitment to complete transportation networks.

## What Drivers Can Expect

**Duration & Disruption:** Most major projects span multiple years, concluding in 2026 or 2027; certain phases may require lane restrictions, ramp or overnight closures and traffic shifts. UDOT stresses that weather-dependent work may affect schedules.

**Safety:** With heavy equipment zones and temporary layouts across the state, motorists are urged to slow down and practice heightened caution.

**Planning Ahead:** UDOT recommends checking its online traffic portal or using its app for real-time updates. Signing up for travel alerts and following the agency on social platforms offer an extra layer of preparedness.

## Looking Ahead: Vision for 2025 and Beyond

UDOT’s strategy balances capacity expansion with preservation. Projects like the Geneva Road widening and US-6 corridor improvements deliver community connectivity, while multimodal investments — from shared paths to bus-only lanes — support Utah’s rapid growth in population and vehicle traffic.

In future years, planners point to growing congestion challenges along key corridors like I-15, I-80 and Legacy Highway, where environmental reviews and funding considerations will shape major expansions. The agency’s ongoing work, including enhanced freeway markings and upgraded bridge structures, supports its larger modernization agenda.

UDOT advises motorists to deal better with road construction by using UDOT’s online traffic portal and smartphone app, allowing extra travel time during work hours, and by following UDOT on X, Facebook and Instagram for alerts and updates.

*EDITORS NOTE: Research for this article was done with the help of a large language model (AI).*

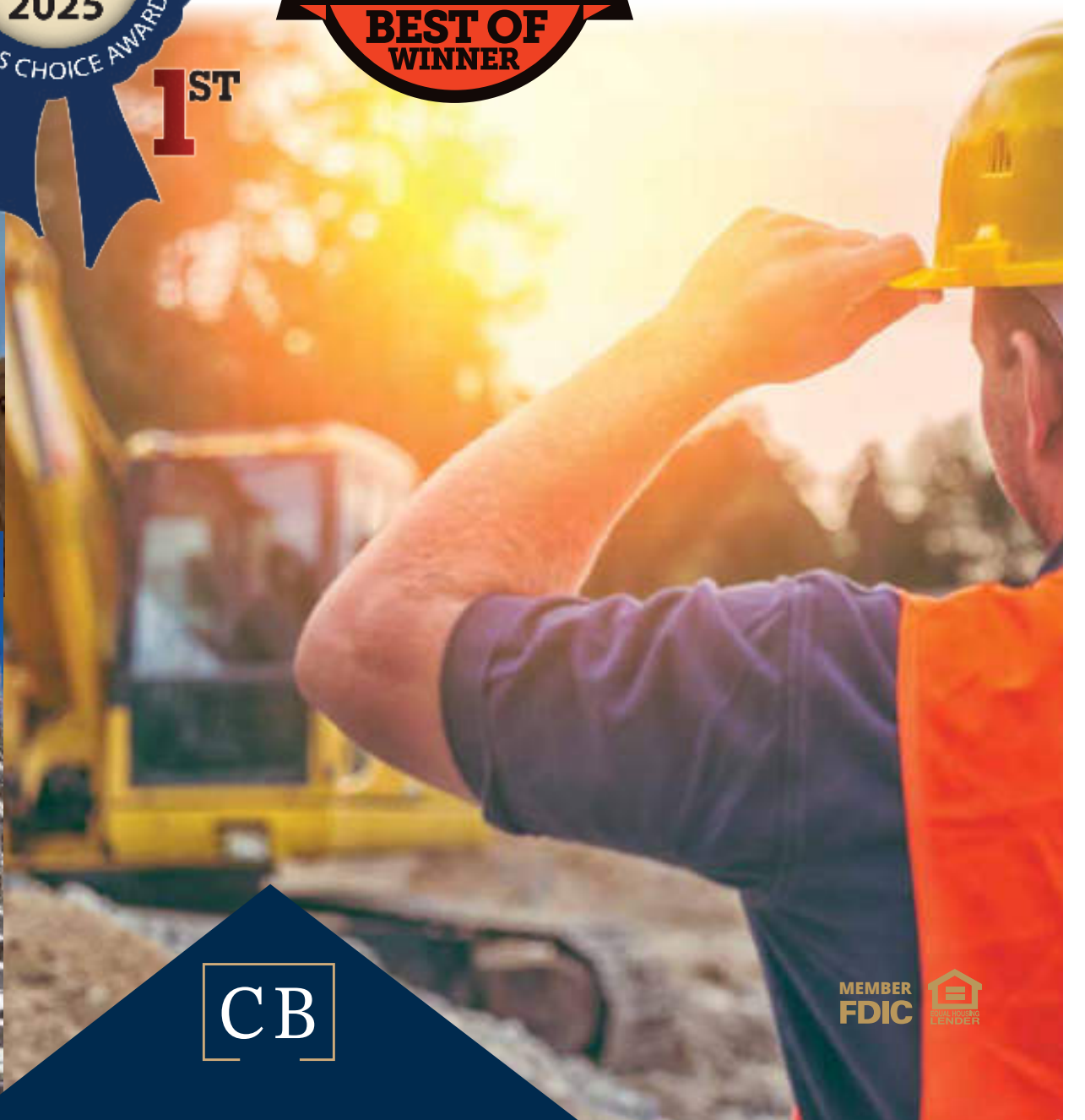


UDOT engineers conduct a “slump test” on concrete being poured on a bridge project along I-15 in Davis County. UDOT has \$1.68 billion in transportation projects underway in the state. (Photo courtesy UDOT)



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# Building the future of skilled workers

## Sherry Rauch

Davis Technical College

The construction industry is the backbone of infrastructure, housing and economic growth, but it faces a critical challenge. Employers are struggling to find and keep skilled workers. With experienced tradespeople retiring and fewer young people entering the field, the need for an understanding of employee motivations and retention strategies has never been more urgent.

### Fueling the Need for Skilled Workers

Many skilled workers are part of the baby boomer generation and are aging out of the workforce. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimated that between 2022 and 2032, nearly 800,000 construction positions would become available largely due to retirements and replacements. These retirements are leaving a significant gap in both expertise and hands-on experience.

At the same time, Utah is one of the fastest-growing states in the nation. New housing developments, commercial projects and infrastructure expansions are driving demand for skilled labor.

Other factors have contributed to the current labor shortage, and many long-standing issues are coming to a head.

*Degree-First Culture.* For decades, high schools and parents emphasized four-year college degrees. Technical skills training and trade schools were not discussed as an option. Also, some high schools have excluded shop class offerings, limiting exposure to hands-on trades. As a result, fewer students considered construction as a respected career path.

*Misconceptions About the Trades.* There's also a perception problem. Construction jobs are often seen as dirty, dangerous, or lacking upward mobility. In reality, many trades require complex problem-solving, technical knowledge and specialized certifications. Yet the outdated image persists, discouraging new workers from entering the field.

*Lack of Training Pathways.* Another issue is the limited availability of affordable, accessible training. Not every region offers strong apprenticeship programs; many employers can't afford to train new hires from scratch.

*Less Interest from Younger Generations.* Construction is perceived as hot and physically demanding, with seasonal employment. Many young people are more interested in new technology and remote positions.

To this point, Thomas Steed, owner of Mason Electric, says, "At times, the environment is very hot, and many new hires choose to leave. Others don't have the work ethic

needed for this type of work. The ones that stay enjoy their careers. If they make it three months, they'll make it three years."

Steed says he likes to "snag" promising high school students enrolled in technical college apprenticeship programs. These students are already interested in the career and have some basic skills. By hiring them young, he can develop their skills to his specific needs.

### Aligning with Values

To build a sustainable workforce, the construction industry must appeal to the values and motivations of younger generations — particularly millennials and Gen Z, who now make up the majority of the labor market. Besides competitive pay and benefits, here are some key motivations:

*Career Growth and Development.* Employers that offer clear career paths — such as apprenticeships that lead to licensure or programs that promote from within — are far more likely to retain talent. Training in new technologies, leadership development and continuing education can all boost engagement.

*Flexibility and Balance.* While construction isn't typically known for flexible work arrangements, companies that offer paid time off and accommodations for personal needs are more appealing to younger workers. Even small changes in work-life balance can make a big difference in recruitment.

*Purpose and Meaning.* Today's young professionals want more than just a paycheck; they want to feel that their work matters. Careers in construction can offer that meaning: building homes for families, improving roads for the community, or creating sustainable infrastructure. Emphasizing these societal benefits can help attract idealistic job seekers.

*Tech Integration.* This generation has grown up with digital tools and expects them in the workplace. Using drones, project management software, digital blueprints and other innovations not only boosts efficiency, it signals that the company is modern and forward-thinking.

*Respect and Inclusion.* Young employees want workplaces where they feel respected, included and safe. That means addressing bias, offering mentorship opportunities, and active listening. A welcoming culture is a strong recruitment and retention tool.

Blake Flannery, CEO of Shamrock Plumbing, says that a good culture is essential to the company. They sponsor multiple activities throughout the year for Shamrock families, such as renting a movie theater, sponsoring a zoo visit, and giving away vacation trips during the holidays. Interestingly, he added that "they expect everyone to pull their weight," which he feels builds respect within their teams.

As part of their commitment to service, Shamrock Plumbing backs an annual volunteer trip to Mexi-

co, where multiple employees help build schools and houses through the Mayan Miracle Foundation.

Also, focusing on culture and morale, Carson Gillette, owner of CG Plumbing, says that his company gathers for activities multiple times throughout the year. These activities include camping days, Lagoon Day, a holiday party and more. This helps build connections and camaraderie with his employees.

Gillette has a few suggestions for the hiring process: "I'm extremely choosy. I'll interview someone three times before hiring them to ensure they're a good fit. And, after 90 days, we sit down together and discuss how it's going for them and the company." Employees enjoying the work are the perfect choice to move into apprenticeship programs to begin filling that knowledge gap left by the retiring generation.

### Skills Education

Apprenticeships and certificates are offered at more and more state colleges and universities, such as Weber State University and Salt Lake Community College.

The state's technical colleges, such as Davis Technical College and Mountainland Technical College, offer affordable, hands-on programs

### Government Programs

The good news is that the need for skilled construction workers is no longer flying under the radar. In Utah and across the U.S., state and federal initiatives are starting to take hold.

At the state level, the Utah Department of Workforce Services funds construction-focused training and apprenticeship programs, offering wage subsidies and incentives to companies that hire and train new workers.

Talent Ready Utah and the Utah System of Higher Education have teamed up to create programs such as Utah Works and Talent Ready Apprenticeship Connection to provide paid work experience opportunities for students.

At the national level, more funds have been available for roads, airports and other state infrastructure (IIJA) — projects that require tens of thousands of skilled workers. Other assistance from the federal government includes programs like the Perkins V Act to support career and technical education and the Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) that helps employers build formal training tracks.



Beckham Dickson, Davis Tech secondary student, 2025 SkillsUSA National Gold Medal Winner in Plumbing

in plumbing, electrical, HVAC and more. They form partnerships with employers to ensure students are learning real-world skills.

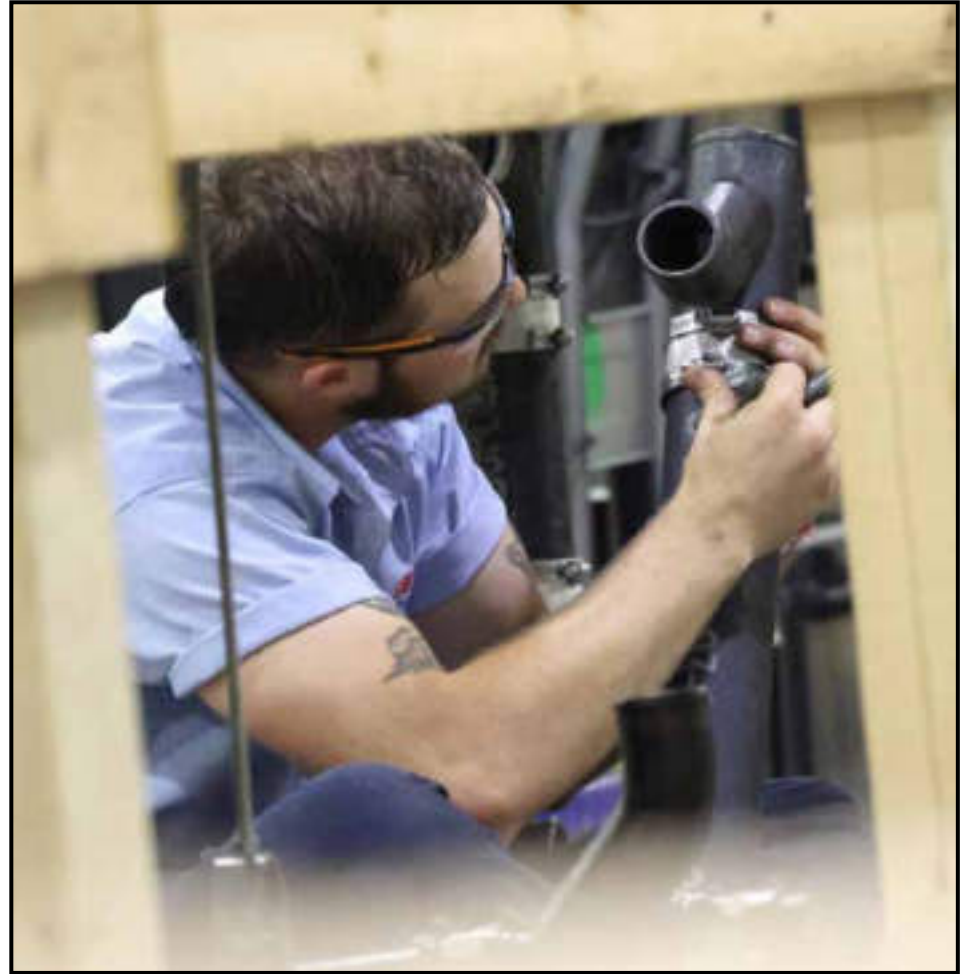
“Our employer partnerships make all the difference,” says Shawn Swapp, director of construction profession programs at Davis Technical College (Davis Tech). “Companies work closely with our faculty to align the skills we teach to what’s needed in the industry.” Students need 576 classroom hours and 8,000 on-the-job training hours to become licensed journeymen, so close partnerships are essential — it’s a win-win.

Swapp continues, “We hold our apprentices to high standards, and year after year, they rise to the challenge — earning top honors at national competitions like SkillsUSA and proving they’re among the best tradespeople in the country.”

### Part of the Solution

The future of the construction industry depends on all of us. Whether you’re an educator, business owner, policymaker or community member, you play a vital role in supporting and promoting skilled trades. By investing in training, creating inclusive and rewarding work environments, and reshaping how we talk about careers in construction, we can help build a pipeline of capable, motivated workers. The challenge is real — but so is the opportunity. Together, we can ensure the next generation is ready to build the homes, schools, and infrastructure our communities need.

“It’s hard to find skilled workers, but you can build them,” says Flannery. “For a long time, I was worried about this new generation, but lately, I’ve seen rock stars! I think we’re going to be just fine.”



Thomas Larson, Davis Tech Post-Secondary student, 2025 SkillsUSA National Silver Medal Winner in Plumbing

## A new type of ‘trailer’ home

**Brice Wallace**

*Salt Lake Business Journal*

Imagine living in a home that has seen more of the U.S. — or the world — than you have.

That can be the case when a person lives in “cargotecture,” individual homes or apartments made from recycled shipping containers. It gives a whole new twist to the term “mobile homes.”

Cargotecture, an offshoot of modular building, is still in its nascent stage, with projects sprinkled throughout the U.S. and featuring various sizes of containers that once held products but now hold people.

One example is Box 500 Apartments at 543 S. 500 W., Salt Lake City, which has six stories of apartments that range from studios up to two bedrooms and one bathroom.

Modular single-family homes also are cropping up in the U.S. and elsewhere, with its parts manufactured at a plant and then assembled at the construction site.

“Modular can help solve this [housing] crisis,” McCall Judd, director of strategy at Synergy Modular, said at a ULI (Urban Land Institute) Utah event in Salt Lake City. “It can actually be the solution.”

With offices in Seattle and Arizona, Synergy Modular has used modular methods to build Cheatham Street Flats in Texas, consisting of 143 units of student housing, retail and restaurant space and two levels of underground parking; Crest Steel in Riverside, California, consisting of single-story office space; and a mixed-use building in Washington that has one story of basement parking, one story of commercial office space and housing support at street level, and four stories of studio and one-bedroom dwelling units of affordable housing.

Shipping container living has its obvious limitations. Ceiling heights are usually 8 feet, 10 inches at most, but flooring and roof insulation can reduce that figure. The interior width is likely to be about 7 feet.

But container houses and apartments typically are quicker to build, are cost-effective, durable, semi-permanent, architecturally interesting, and eco-friendly because they are made from recycled materials.

In Minnesota, one project is spread across 16 sites and consists of 126 modules for 84 units, with construction 33 percent quicker than that of a traditional project. BlackBox Container Studios says its single-use shipping containers can be converted into cabins, guest houses, offices, safe rooms, garden sheds, retreats, wood shops, in-law suites and game rooms, among other uses.

British Columbia, Canada, has a nine-story hotel, plus a home made from four recycled containers that is rented out via Airbnb. The Atira Women’s Resource Society’s recycled shipping container housing development in Vancouver has six social housing units for older women as well as six rental units. Atira says the project was inspired by BC Hydro’s “House of the Future,” a recycled-shipping-container housing demonstration project built on the front lawn of BC Hydro’s downtown office during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

While studio units there range from 280 to 290 square feet net living area, Atira touts the benefits of shipping containers as having the ability withstand whatever Mother Nature can throw at them. It says estimates are that the world has 24 million vacant shipping containers, and repurposing them “is good for the environment, provides a base structure that reduces the cost of construction and construction timelines” and they look great.



Children ride scooters around the back side of Box 500 Apartments in Salt Lake City. The six-stories apartment complex is an example of housing made from recycled shipping containers. (Brice Wallace/Salt Lake Business Journal)

Other examples include temporary workforce housing of 15,000 square feet in a complex at a Canadian Forces Base offering 90 bedrooms, 24 bathrooms and six laundry rooms; Potter’s Lane, an affordable housing project with 16 480-square-foot living spaces for homeless military veterans in Southern California; apartments in Texas consisting of two buildings with four levels each; a three-story container building in Washington, D.C., that has two sets of nine containers; 100 apartments in a four-story student apartment complex in France; 13 residences made

from 24 containers in a three-story project in Phoenix; and eight residents made from 16 containers at a two-story project also in Phoenix.

Whether container housing or not, the number of modular projects is rising, and Judd wants more manufacturers and developers to learn about it. “It’s not going to work for every project. It’s not going to work for every area. ... There are limitations, and we still have a long way to go,” she said.

“I want this industry to grow and I want everybody to know about it, because it’s coming.”

# COMMERCIAL LANDSCAPE & IRRIGATION CONTRACTORS

Ranked by Number of Utah Full-Time Employees

# BUSINESS JOURNAL List

	Company Name Address	Phone Web	Number of Utah Full-Time Employees	Value of Current Landscape Construction	Bonding Capacity	Heavy Equipment Fleet Size	Upcoming Notable Projects	Year Established	Top Local Executive
1	<b>Sinc Constructors Co.</b> 1299 W. 75 N. Centerville, UT 84014	801-898-4448 sinconstructors.com	125	\$40M	\$3M	58	Glendale Park, Utah State Capitol	2011	Mike Sowby CEO
2	<b>MD Property Services</b> 947 S. 500 E., Ste. 100 American Fork, UT 84003	801-763-0272 mdpropertyinc.com	60	\$1M-\$5M	\$3M	15	Edge Homes, Key Bank, Petterson Construction	1991	David Gray President
3	<b>TerraWorks Inc.</b> 609 S. 4050 W. SLC, UT 84104	801-693-4115 terraworks landscapingutah.com	40	\$1M-\$5M	\$3M	9	SLC Hotel, Layton Court remodel, Merit Medical xeriscaping	2001	Paul Sannar Founder
4	<b>Great Western Landscape</b> 3706 W. 500 S. SLC, UT 84104	801-978-2226 greatwestern landscape.com	32	*	*	*	Orem UT LDS Temple, 650 Main Street, SLC, Glacier Hills School	1997	Brandan Worthen President & Operations Manager
5	<b>Western Meadows Landscape</b> 761 E. 360 S. Orem, UT 84097	801-420-0041 Email: wmlandscape@ hotmail.com	31	\$4M	\$1M	30	Logan Institute, Utah State Development Center	1995	Kyle Nebeker President
6	<b>Stratton Landscape Group</b> 754 W. 700 S. Pleasant Grove, UT 84062	801-785-8011 strattonandbratt.com	26	*	*	*	Hale Center Theater, Thanksgiving Point Gardens, City Creek Park, The Quad at Salt Lake Community College	1967	Zack Stratton CEO
7	<b>Kendall Lawnsapes</b> P.O. Box 1055 Layton, UT 84041	801-458-8989 kendalllawnsapes.com	25	⩵\$1M	*	10	Gentile Station Development	2013	Kyler Kendall Owner
8	<b>Star Landscape</b> 935 N. Main St. North Salt Lake, UT 84054	801-294-7227 starlandscape.com	15-20	*	*	20	*	1980	Tommy Carter Alan Noall, Jason Noall Co-Owners
9	<b>RBI Inc.</b> 12712 S. 125 E. Draper, UT 84020	801-553-0500 N/A	15	\$1M-\$5M	\$6M	10	Prison Complex, Ogden Bus Rapid Transit, WSU	2004	Robin Ralphs President
10	<b>Lawson Landscape Design and Construction</b> 338 N. 200 E. Farmington, UT 84025	801-815-6573 lawsonlandscape.com	12	\$1M-\$5M	\$750,000	8	Novel in Daybreak, Marmalade Apartments, Entertainment Village South Jordan, Taylorsville City Center, Layton Harmony Park	2005	Jake Lawson Owner
11	<b>Waterscape Landscaping</b> 5909 S. Stratler St. Murray, UT 84107	801-298-0369 waterscape landscaping.com	*	*	*	*	Stout Office Building, Salt Lake City Mosquito Abatement District Building, Petersen Farms Assisted Living, Covington Senior Living	2019	Tad Hansen Landscape Architect



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# PROJECT MANAGEMENT FIRMS

Ranked by Number of Utah Projects 2024



Company Name Address	Phone Web	Number of Utah Projects 2024	No. of Certified UT Construction Managers	Utah Gross Revenue 2024	Total Gross Revenue 2024	Number of Utah Employees	Year Established	Services Offered	Owner
<b>1</b> JLL 111 S. Main St., Ste. 300 SLC, UT 84111	801-456-9510 us.jll.com/en/ deliver-projects	35*	0	*	*	5*	2007	Development management, design and construction management, capital and cost management, multi-market delivery, relocation management, consulting and feasibility	Wick Udy Executive Managing Director
<b>2</b> Project Control Inc. 445 N. 2000 W., Ste. 7 Springville, UT 84663	801-262-9315 pci1980.com	27*	2	\$5.1M*	\$5.7M*	23	1980	Project control specializes in managing total project development for construction projects, with three primary goals: time, cost, and quality controls	Ryan Johnson
<b>3</b> Construction Management Consultants 406 W. South Jordan Pkwy., Ste. 440 South Jordan, UT 84095	801-201-0119 cmcUT.com	20	1	\$1.5M	\$1.5M	8	2004	Project, program, design, development, relocation & construction management, owner's rep., estimating, scheduling, cost segregation & feasibility studies, bank inspections, FF&E procurement, entitlements, pre-construction, risk management, cost control	Jeff Davis President
<b>4</b> Construction Control Corp. 307 W. 200 S., Ste. 4006 SLC, UT 84101	801-578-1201 cccutah.com	12	2	*	*	6	1984	Construction management/owner's representative services, cost consulting & estimating, scheduling, value engineering, cost segregation studies, construction cost auditing, program management, pre-construction services	Kris Larson President & CEO



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# BONDING AGENCIES

Ranked by Surety Premium Volume 2024



Company Name Address	Phone Web	Surety Premium Volume 2024	Number of Surety-Only Professionals	Bonded Contract Value	Number of Offices Nationwide	Year Est.	Owner/Managing Principal
<b>1</b> Holmes Murphy and Associates 132 S. State St., Ste. 315 SLC, UT 84111	801-537-7467 holmesmurphy.com	\$100M	45	*	16	1919	Josh Loftis, SVP Surety Grady Dotson VP Client Executive
<b>2</b> Moreton & Company 101 S. 200 E., Ste. 300 SLC, UT 84111	801-531-1234 moreton.com	\$26.5M	6	*	3	1910	Todd Smith President
<b>3</b> Leavitt Insurance & Central Bonds 746 E. Winchester St., Ste. 120 Murray, UT 84107	801-798-7343 leavitt.com/licb	\$6M	3	\$300M	3	1981	Brett Palmer Co-Owner
<b>4</b> Beehive Insurance Agency 4393 S. Riverboat Road, Ste. 200 SLC, UT 84123	801-685-6860 beehiveinsurance.com	\$6M	3	\$1B	3	1961	Tyson Perkes President
<b>5</b> Arthur J. Gallagher Risk Management Services, LLC 172 N. East Promontory, Ste. J-260 Farmington, UT 84025	801-924-1400 ajg.com	\$3.25M	2	\$300M	265	1927	Drew Rendon Client Services Manager Michael Wade Regional EVP
<b>6</b> The Buckner Co. Inc. 6550 S. Millrock Drive, Ste. 300 SLC, UT 84121	801-937-6700 buckner.com	\$2.5M	3	\$500M	8	1936	Terry Buckner CEO
<b>7</b> HUB International Salt Lake City 1100 E. 6600 S., Ste 400 SLC, UT 84121	801-288-1600 hubinternational.com	*	7*	*	1	1948	Sam Clark
<b>7</b> Universal Business Insurance 9980 S. 300 W., Ste. 320 Sandy, UT 84070	801-984-6100 ubinsurance.com	*	6*	\$600M	2	1991	Jeff Shields, Owner Kevin Andrews, President Brett Mayer, VP Operations
<b>7</b> USI Insurance Services LLC 1100 E. 6600 S., Ste. 280 SLC, UT 84121	801-713-4550 usi.com	*	55*	\$700M	200	1994	Katie Wood SVP



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# Energy demand is surging. Can the grid keep up?

“Power is the new water” is a catchphrase circulating in energy conversations across the country, because energy needs are changing at an unpredictable and unprecedented pace.

From the rapid growth of electric vehicles (EVs) to the increasing demand for data centers and manufacturing facilities, how we consume electricity is evolving faster than ever. At the same time, businesses and consumers are pushing for cleaner, more sustainable energy solutions.

But while demand surges, the power grid is struggling to keep up. Aging infrastructure, supply constraints, and the complex transition to renewable energy sources create bottlenecks that threaten reliability and efficiency. As industries expand and electrification accelerates, the question is no longer about where our energy comes from, but whether the grid can deliver it when and where it’s needed most.

## The Energy Shift: What’s Driving the Demand?

Historically, U.S. energy demand followed relatively predictable patterns. Businesses and homes drew power primarily from centralized power plants, with peak usage times aligning with work hours and evening routines. But today, new factors are reshaping the energy landscape.

**Electrification of Transportation:** The widespread adoption of EVs is adding significant demand to the grid. Charging infrastructure, especially fast-charging stations, requires large amounts of power, creating new stress points in the system. Consider this: The average U.S. home uses about 7 kilowatts (kW) of peak demand pow-



Sam  
DAVIS



Darrin  
SANDERS

er to run essential appliances and functions, while the typical EV charger draws roughly the same amount. That means when a single homeowner installs an EV charger in their garage, the neighborhood transformer suddenly must handle the equivalent of an additional household’s demand. Now, multiply that across an entire community, and the strain on local distribution systems becomes apparent.

**Data Centers & High-Tech Facilities:** With the rise of AI, cloud computing, and digital services, data centers

have become some of the largest energy consumers. These facilities operate 24/7 and require an enormous, steady energy supply from hundreds of megawatts (MWs) to the newest data centers requiring over 1 gigawatt (GW) or 1,000 MW. A 200 MW data center has an electrical capacity of roughly 29,000 times the amount of energy for an average US home! Technology and data advancements aren’t slowing — they’re picking up the pace faster than anticipated. With the demand for more data centers to support these new developments, our energy crisis is reaching an all-time high.

**Manufacturing Growth:** Industrial facilities consume more power than ever, especially those shifting toward automation and electrified processes. Some regions are experiencing energy shortages simply because local grids cannot meet the demands of new industrial expansions.

**Renewable Energy & Distributed Generation:** Solar and wind energy play a growing role in electricity generation, but they also introduce variability. Unlike traditional power plants, these sources depend on weath-

er conditions, making energy storage and grid flexibility more critical than ever. Investing in these sources is necessary but time-consuming and expensive, making planning and executing renewable energy generation difficult.

## Grid Limitations: An Aging System Under Pressure

The U.S. power grid was built over several decades, starting in the 1880s and continuing into the 1970s. This grid was established to serve a very different world. While utilities are upgrading, many regions still rely on outdated infrastructure that wasn’t designed for today’s high-demand, high-volatility energy environment.

**Capacity Constraints:** Many local substations and transmission lines are already at or near capacity, limiting the ability to accommodate new energy loads. This is particularly evident in regions experiencing rapid development, like the Salt Lake Valley and Ada County, Idaho.

**Interconnection Delays:** Businesses looking to connect to the grid — whether for a new facility, a solar installation or an EV charging hub — often face long wait times. Securing the necessary approvals and infrastructure upgrades can take years, even up to a decade.

**Grid Reliability Risks:** Extreme weather events, cyber threats, and aging equipment contribute to potential outages. As energy demand grows, so does the risk of system strain and failures.

## Solutions for the Future: How the Industry is Adapting

Utility companies, businesses and energy professionals are exploring a range of solutions to keep pace with rising demand.

**Grid Modernization:** Investments in new substations, upgraded transmission lines and smart grid technology are helping improve capacity and ef-

ficiency. Learn more about how high-voltage solutions support grid updates from Hunt’s High Voltage Division.

**Energy Storage:** Battery storage solutions are becoming a key tool in balancing supply and demand, especially as renewables become a larger part of the energy mix.

**Microgrids & On-Site Generation:** Some businesses are turning to microgrids, backup power systems and on-site renewable energy to reduce dependence on the main grid.

**Energy Efficiency & Demand Management:** Businesses can reduce strain on the grid by optimizing energy use, shifting demand to off-peak hours, and implementing energy-efficient technologies.

## Preparing for an Electrified Future

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At Hunt Electric, we work with businesses to assess their energy requirements, implement advanced power solutions, and navigate the challenges of today’s evolving grid. As the landscape continues to shift, having a strategic approach to energy planning isn’t just an advantage, it’s a necessity.

*Sam Davis is an Electrical Executive Division manager with Hunt Electric. He has 20 years of experience in electrical contracting, contributing solutions for various groundbreaking projects across the Wasatch Front.*

*Darrin Sanders, PE, RCDD, LEED, AP, is the engineering design-build manager at Hunt Electric, bringing 30 years of experience to high-profile projects.*

# Developer expands management to Utah properties

Kettler, a leading real estate investor, developer and property management company, has announced it has been awarded contracts to manage multiple communities across Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. This represents the largest single expansion of third-party management services in the past decade.

With the addition of these communities, Kettler Property Management now oversees 97 affordable and conventional properties totaling more

than 22,000 units across 10 states — reinforcing the firm’s standing as a national leader in both asset classes.

“This expansion reflects the trust our partners place in Kettler to deliver exceptional value and results,” said Cindy Fisher, company president. “Our tailored approach, deep operational expertise and performance platform set us apart in the competitive property management landscape.”

Kettler has developed a performance platform that integrates reve-

nue-management tools, resident service technologies, and sustainability practices to optimize operations and improve real-time responsiveness.

“Our performance platform sets us apart by enabling us to make data-driven decisions that improve the resident experience and efficiency of operations,” said Fisher.

This growth aligns with Kettler’s five-year strategic plan, which emphasizes deliberate entry into high-opportunity markets and a deeper national

presence.

“Residents are the heart of every Kettler-managed community,” said Kimberly Ramsey, senior vice president of community operations. “By combining prompt, responsive service with knowledgeable on-site teams and the right technology, we’re able to meet resident needs more effectively and create places people are proud to call home. That’s what ultimately builds strong, lasting communities.”

# Nelson Labs breaks ground on new multi-million-dollar cleanroom facility

**Becky Ginos**

*Salt Lake Business Journals*

Utah-based medical device testing laboratory Nelson Labs broke ground June 12 on a new multi-million-dollar cleanroom facility in Salt Lake City.

The lab provides microbiological and analytical chemistry testing for the medical device and pharmaceutical industries worldwide. It is located at 6280 S. Redwood Road.

“It’s the 40th year anniversary of the local company,” said microbiologist Thor Rollins. “We test medical devices and pharmaceuticals to make sure they are safe and sterile to use for patients. When you go to the hospital, everything you touch or that touches you needs to be sterile.”

Nelson Labs is best known for sterilization and validation that it is sterile, he said. “You don’t want to introduce bacteria into a patient. We make sure it’s sterile and that we kill the bacteria.”

A sterility test is super-simple, Rollins said. “We take a sterile medical device into a cleanroom and

try to eliminate as much bacteria as possible. We put it into a container with a liquid medium that gives the bacteria everything they would need to grow.”

Rollins said over time they look for growth. “It tells us if any bacteria has escaped the sterilization process.”

The new cleanroom will have improved filter air vents, he said. “It will also be larger, which allows us more freedom to test more drugs and devices and get more products on the market.”

“We test packaging and the stability of the product,” said Zachery Anderson, senior director of the Salt Lake City lab operations. “We verify that the packaging the product is in is safe for use. Chemicals from the packaging may have come off and leached into the product.”

The cleanroom will provide a much more robust system, he said. “Our microbiologists and scientists make sure we’re meeting industry-specific needs.”

It’s a unique process, said Anderson. “If we had to shut one area down, we had to shut the whole



*A microbiologist tests a sample for bacteria at Nelson Labs. The company recently broke ground for a new cleanroom facility. (Photo courtesy Nelson Labs)*

thing down for three to four days. The cleanroom will allow us to shut down one level at a time.”

From a sterility standpoint, there is a validation process, he said. “There are processes and controls that have to take place before you can use or launch a product to ensure that it meets the regulatory bodies. We can

support end-to-end.”

Nelson Labs is always focused on quality service and science, Anderson said. “We have thousands of clients with 12 labs globally in the U.S., Europe, Mexico and Asia. I’m happy to be a part of Salt Lake City, but also a global organization that safeguards global health.”



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# ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS

Ranked by Total Gross Revenue 2024



	Company Name Address	Phone Web	Total Gross Revenue 2024	Utah Gross Revenue 2024	Bonding Capacity	Experience Modification Rate	No. of Utah Employees	Services Offered	Year Established	President/CEO
1	<b>Cache Valley Electric Co.</b> 875 N. 1000 W. Logan, UT 84321	435-752-6405 cve.com	\$1.1B	\$668M	\$1B+	0.66	1,463	Commercial, mission critical, and heavy industrial electrical construction; transmission lines and substations; signals and utilities; teledata, multimedia, and wireless systems; intrusion detection and access control; network infrastructure, data center, security, and cloud computing technology solutions	1915	Jim Laub CEO
2	<b>Wilson Electric Services Corp.</b> 905 N. Main St., #C-3 North Salt Lake, UT 84054	801-908-6660 wilsonelectric.net	\$261.5M	\$6M	\$300M	0.45	25	Electrical, commercial and industrial, service & maintenance	1968	Wes McClure CEO
3	<b>GSL Electric</b> 8540 S. Sandy Parkway Sandy, UT 84070	801-565-0088 gslelectric.com	\$102.9M	\$102.9M	\$150M aggregate \$50M single	0.95	186	Engineering, construction, low-voltage, service	1981	Lance Capell CEO
4	<b>Taylor Electric Inc.</b> 2650 S. 1030 W. SLC, UT 84119	801-413-1300 taylor-electric.com	\$90.8M	\$88.9M	\$150M	0.67	315	All needs for commercial & industrial construction	1975	Ryan J. Taylor President
5	<b>Rydalch Electric Inc. — a Commonwealth Company</b> 250 W. Plymouth Ave. SLC, UT 84115	801-265-1813 rydalchelectric.com	\$35M	\$35M	\$120M aggregate \$65M single	0.54	140	Electrical design and construction	1994	Mark Rydalch President
6	<b>Olson Electric Company, LLC</b> 3676 W. California Ave., Ste. A116 SLC, UT 84104	801-382-9568 olsonelectric.com	\$8.25M	\$4M	*	0.80	15	Industrial, mining, instrumental, commercial, utility solar	2020	Jared Olson President
7	<b>Central Electric Co. Inc.</b> 5330 S. Riley Lane Murray, UT 84107	801-467-5479 central-electric.com	\$5.23M*	\$5.23M*	*	0.66	31	Commercial, industrial, residential, service	2010	Peter L. Robbins President
8	<b>Eagle Electric Inc.</b> 7000 S. Commerce Park Dr. Midvale, UT 84047	801-255-8089 eagle-electric-inc.com	\$2.4M	\$2.4M	\$5M	0.88	20	New and remodel commercial electrical	1987	Trent Lovendahl President
9	<b>Hunt Electric Inc.</b> 1863 W. Alexander St. SLC, UT 84119	801-975-8844 huntelelectric.com	*	*	\$300M	0.80	750+	Commercial, industrial, mission critical, healthcare, and hospitality electrical construction; transmission, distribution, and substation construction; E-house and electrical systems manufacturing; technology services (Fiber, AV, and DAS); traffic and infrastructure construction; EV charging and battery storage construction; controls and automation	1986	Troy Gregory President & CEO
10	<b>Crux Solutions</b> 2364 B Ave. Ogden, UT 84401	385-289-8195 cruxsolutions utah.com	*	*	*	*	3	Commercial, industrial, residential electrical service	2003	David Williams Owner & CEO
11	<b>Salmon Electric</b> 1778 W. 1180 S. Woods Cross, UT 84087	801-292-3444 salmonelectric.com	*	*	\$16M	*	250+	Commercial, industrial, residential electrical service	1992	Chad Salmon Owner



\*Did not disclose. Please note that some firms chose not to respond, or failed to respond in time to our inquiries. All rights reserved. Copyright 2025 by Salt Lake Business Journal. The Business Journal strives for accuracy in its list publications. If you see errors or omissions in this list, please contact us at lists@slbusinessjournal.com.

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# Utah's future is being built, but who will power it?

*Nick Shelford, director of talent acquisition, and Jeff Satterfield, craft training manager, at Helix Electric of Utah LLC authored this article.*

Utah's skyline is changing, and fast. From tech campuses and high-rises to sprawling infrastructure projects, cranes are part of the landscape — a sign of booming development.

But beneath that visible growth lies a pressing question: Who is going to build all this? As professionals at Helix Electric of Utah LLC (Helix), one of the state's largest electrical contractors, we see the effects of this labor shortage firsthand. Whether recruiting apprentices or managing craft training programs, we're continually navigating the gap between demand and supply.

Like the rest of the country, Utah faces a deepening shortage of construction workers. A report released last year by Associated Builders and Contractors estimates the U.S. will need over half a million additional construction workers. While interest in the trades is slowly ticking upward, the pipeline is still too narrow to meet demand — especially in a state growing as rapidly as Utah.

So, what is standing in the way of progress? And what is working? The answers are layered, but a few themes continue to rise to the top.

## Rethinking the Narrative Around Skilled Trades

One of the largest hurdles in recruiting new talent is not lack of opportunity — it is perception. For decades, many young people (and their parents) have been steered away from trade work in favor of four-year college degrees. While higher education remains valuable, so too does the ability to build, wire or engineer the physical world around us.

Utah has started to move the needle in that regard. School districts like Granite have invested in hands-on programs that introduce students to trades early, while Salt Lake Community College offers pathways into everything from electrical work to solar installation. The message is getting through: skilled trades are not a fallback; they are a future.

Still, many students do not know

how to take the first step. They may hear that the trades offer solid pay and long-term security, but they're unclear on what training is required, how to apply, or what kind of career progression is realistic. Clarifying that path could be the key to unlocking more talent. Companies like Helix are working to bridge that gap by emphasizing early exposure and education that brings visibility to the trades. At Helix, team members regularly engage with high schoolers, job-seekers and adult learners to explain apprenticeship pathways and real-world career tracks.

## Today's Workers Are Wired Differently — In a Good Way

Utah contractors are seeing something interesting happen: Younger recruits may not know their way around a toolbox on Day One, but they are surprisingly adept at digital tools that are transforming how the industry operates. Blueprints on tablets, scheduling apps, 3D modeling — Gen Z workers are not just comfortable with these technologies; they often expect them.

This shift has opened the door to new kinds of training environments. Rather than throwing apprentices straight onto a jobsite, some companies ease them in through prefabrication shops. There, they learn how components come together, how materials are labeled, and how to use the tools of trade, all before setting foot on an active job site.

From there, many apprentices enroll in multi-year programs like those offered by WECA, combining paid jobsite experience with structured training.

## Show Them the Path, and They'll Walk It

For a generation used to rapid progress, the “long game” can be a hard sell. That is why visible, well-marked career paths are more important than ever. When young workers understand what comes next — and what it takes to get there — they are more likely to stay engaged.

Whether it is advancement into supervisory roles, a transition into project management, or the option

to work in the office after field experience, clarity matters. Workers want to know what they are working toward. They want to see the finish line — or at least the next checkpoint.

Employers who can map out that progression and communicate it clearly are ahead of the curve. At Helix, that philosophy is embedded in how the company structures training, mentorship and internal mobility. It is not about holding hands; it is about setting expectations and showing that the journey is worth it.

## Outreach Has to Evolve

Let's be honest, the days of job fairs in gymnasiums aren't cutting it anymore. Although that type of engagement still matters, reaching today's students requires a more engaging, sometimes creative approach.

In Utah, that might look like hosting interactive construction career days or inviting students to try out a hands-on activity like wire-pulling. Some firms are even organizing informal mixers with free food to meet students where they are — and, yes, it works.

Social media and school partnerships are also playing a bigger role. If the industry wants to capture attention early, it must be present, approachable and persistent. Helix has leaned into this shift by combining traditional outreach with student-friendly experiences — from “pull wire” demos to university mixers that give students real interaction with trades professionals.

## Utah is Competitive, Complex and Full of Potential

What sets Utah apart? For one, the state has a relatively strong support system for technical training and licensure. Groups like WECA and AGC offer clear programming and help connect apprentices to the workforce. But that structure comes with challenges, too. For example, licensing requirements, while important, can feel like a barrier to those unfamiliar with the process.

Still, most would agree that Utah's construction market offers a lot to be excited about. It is diverse, with opportunities to work on everything

from luxury mountain developments to public infrastructure. It is also growing, which means upward mobility is very much on the table for those willing to stick with it. As the industry continues to grapple with these challenges, companies like Helix are helping lead the way forward. With a firm belief that workforce development is both a responsibility and a strategic advantage, Helix has embraced a long-view approach that emphasizes hands-on education, structured career progression, and early outreach to the next generation. By investing in prefabrication training, mentoring programs, and partnerships with local schools and trade organizations, Helix is demonstrating what it looks like to meet young workers where they are — and guide them toward sustainable, rewarding careers in construction. Helix's efforts not only serve its own workforce pipeline but also offer a model for other firms navigating similar labor pressures across Utah.

## What the Industry Must Do

There is no single fix for the workforce gap. But one thing is clear: Construction companies cannot afford to treat workforce development as an afterthought. Training, outreach and mentorship are not “nice-to-haves” — they are business necessities.

That means investing in talent early. It means helping young workers see a future in the trades, not just through words, but through real opportunities. And it means understanding that today's workforce values growth, purpose and transparency.

Construction is one of the few industries where you can literally point to your work and say, “I built that.” For a lot of people, that still means something. It is up to the industry to remind them, and to make sure the next generation sees a place for themselves in the process. As Helix looks ahead to powering many more projects and empowering the future workforce that will build them, we encourage the industry to embrace what those words truly mean — don't forget to invest in the next person as you would in your next project.

# Milford Mining gets Rio Tinto Kennecott's help in restarting operation, supplying copper concentrate

Rio Tinto Kennecott has announced a new three-year agreement with Milford Mining Co. in Beaver County.

Under the agreement, Rio Tinto will loan \$5 million to Milford Mining to help in the restart of its Central Utah-based mining operations in order to resume delivery of copper concentrate from Milford Mine to Kennecott's Salt Lake City smelter.

The agreement will help boost the domestic production of both copper and critical minerals, Rio Tinto Kennecott said in its announcement.

The loan is part of Milford Mining's recently announced expansion, which will include growing operations, exploring new sites adjacent to its existing mine, investing in new technology and improving current infrastructure. The mine is a significant part of the Milford community and Beaver County in Central Utah. This partnership will help create job opportunities and contribute to the local economy, Rio Tinto said.

“This agreement marks a significant step forward for metal and mineral production in Utah,” said Nate Foster, man-

aging director of Rio Tinto Kennecott. “The delivery of copper from the Milford Mine to our smelter will keep copper in the U.S., supporting a secure supply chain and increasing domestic copper production. This new partnership will also create a positive impact on both the local and national economies.”

“Milford Mining Co. Utah is pleased to partner with Rio Tinto Kennecott via the immediate delivery of our copper concentrate, ensuring the local Milford community continues to play a

crucial part in supporting America's critical minerals effort, and fully benefits from the prevailing bullish pricing in the buoyant U.S. copper market,” said Brendan Moseley, CEO of Milford Mining.

Rio Tinto has been a producer and supplier of copper and other critical minerals in the United States for over 150 years. Its Kennecott smelter is one of just two operating in the U.S. Currently, Rio Tinto Kennecott produces about 20 percent of the U.S. refined copper supply annually.

# St. George construction projects on the fast track

**Tom Haraldsen**

*Salt Lake Business Journal*

St. George is undergoing a substantial construction boom right now — across roads, civic buildings, tech campuses, residential and airport infrastructure. It's hard to travel anywhere in the community and not see crews and equipment working, even in 100-plus degree temperatures this summer.

Milken Institute ranked St. George as the second-best-performing small city in the nation, with a job growth rate of 23.9 percent from 2018 to 2023, and a staggering 96.8 percent increase in high-tech GDP. So it's no surprise that there's so much construction and expansion going on.

## TRANSPORTATION

Road and highway projects are ongoing in Washington County. I-15 work includes a \$195 million addition of lanes between Bluff Street (Exit 6) and St. George Blvd. (Exit 8). New overpasses and underpasses at 400 East and 900 South are being designed, with work underway and expected to continue through early 2026.

The Utah Department of Transportation is planning to resurface that corridor, raise medians, upgrade pedestrian ramps and create an active-



*Townhouses and additional hotel rooms are being added to the Black Desert Resort in nearby Ivins. All photos by Tom Haraldsen/Salt Lake Business Journal*

transportation trail in downtown St. George. There are also plans to widen 3000 East to five lanes from Mall Drive to 2630 South. A conceptual Northern Corridor Highway, referred to as Northway, is currently on hold due to environmental pushback, but city officials are still hoping to make progress on it in the months ahead.

## CIVIC/COMMERCIAL

Construction is underway on a new

city hall at 61 South Main, across from a small park. The \$45 million facility will include an adjacent four-level parking garage. It's expected to be completed later this year.

At the site of the old St. George airport, the Tech Ridge Campus continues to expand. The 180-acre site is focused on three phases: office space, retail space and housing. It will also include 60 acres of trails, parks and open space.

The renovated Hangar C houses

several small tech businesses, including Zonos, Vasion, BusyBusy and Intergalactic. The Planstin Administration Building that will include 100,000 square feet of Class A office space, is in the design process.

Along with offices and classrooms, Tech Ridge is designed to offer cafes, restaurants, brew pubs, shops and entertainment once it's fully developed. The Cliffside Restaurant is open with stunning views of the city and outdoor dining on a terrace. The Tech Ridge Cafe is also open in the Dixie Tech College on-site.

Tech Ridge also plans to create a residential mixture of townhouses, apartments and condos on site, and one very unique feature, the Stairs at Tech Ridge. You can traverse up the side of the mountain on a 333-step staircase that covers 450 feet of elevation. It opened last January for the Dragon's Tail Stair Climb Challenge, which will become an annual event.

The continuous construction at Black Desert Resort has significant economic impact for St. George and all of Southern Utah. The multi-million-dollar development includes a championship golf course that has already hosted both a PGA and an LPGA event, and will continue to do that going forward. Townhouses

see ST. GEORGE page F22

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## ST. GEORGE

from page F21

and hotel rooms are being added, along with other amenities. Plans also call for a waterpark and “downtown” shopping district at the site.

### AIRPORTS AND UTILITIES

The St. George Regional Airport continues to grow and expand, with a \$15 million air-traffic control tower set for completion in 2026. There will be major terminal apron expansion and a new south taxiway connector completed. Not far from the airport, Fire Station 10 was constructed at 2070 E. Flowers Way, and Fire Station 1 is being upgraded.

A \$65 million water plant upgrade, which boosts its capacity from 17 million to 25.5 million gallons, has been completed. Regional wastewater expansion is also continuing. Water infrastructure enhancements include \$9 million for the Graveyard Wash reservoir and \$8.3 million for new water storage tanks. Plans are also being developed for replacement of sewer mains and clarifiers, as well as secondary water system improvements.

### EDUCATION/COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

At Utah Tech University, a new 120,000-square-foot general classroom building that should open this fall includes 45 classrooms, offices and study rooms.

In support of neighboring Washington City, UDOT opened a new interchange on I-15 at Main Street, widening the travel lane in each direction.

### COMMERCIAL/RETAIL

While reconstruction is underway at the St. George Place Shopping Center, which should reopen later this year, REI has announced it will open a store this fall. The center is going through an extensive rebuild.

A new Hyatt-themed development and retail hubs, along with trail/path expansion and a skate park, are underway in neighboring Washington City.

And one more “new neighbor” to add to the list for Washington County” the first phase of actor Kevin Costner’s new Territory Movie Studio has risen near the St. George Regional Airport. The \$100 million project on 45 acres includes a sound-

stage. Costner said the studio is up and running and he hopes to get back to filming his third movie in the “Horizon: An American Saga” series later this year. A second building yet to be completed will feature more soundstage space and offices.

Construction crews are keeping busy in Southern Utah.



A complete rebuild of the St. George Place Shopping Center should be completed this fall.



A \$45 million rebuild of St. George City Hall includes a four-level parking garage.



Construction projects are plentiful as the growth in St. George continues to explode.

# MOUNTAIN STATES FENCE

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# Once quaint and iconic, Washington County hot springs resort has become big business

**John Rogers**

*Salt Lake Business Journal*

It's 1918 and the rules for bathers at the new 15-by-45-foot pool at what will become Pah Tempe Resort along the Virgin River near La Verkin in Washington County reads like a dressing guide for prudish Victorians.

Women's bathing outfits must have elastic below the elbow and elastic below the knee to keep those parts of the suit in their proper place. And a skirt is required to hide any hint of shapeliness. Men are permitted to swim in a shirt and overalls, so long as the shirt sleeves are elbow-length and any cutoff overalls extend below the knee.

A supply of conforming apparel had been received from ZCMI in Salt Lake City and rental is included in the 25-cent entry fee to the hot springs-fed swimming hole.

The new recreational opportunity was quite a sensation when it opened as a commercial enterprise more than 100 years ago, despite a history that extends back long before the arrival of Mormon settlers in the previous century.

This month, a new commercial undertaking in the canyon is equally as sensational as WorldSprings opens its latest world-class resort, called Zion Canyon Hot Springs. The new spa joins WorldSprings Dallas and WorldSprings at Iron Mountain Hot Springs in Greenwood Springs, Colorado, in the WorldSprings portfolio.

Where that single pool and a few hot pots stood in 1918 along the Hurricane canal for bathers from around the county, WorldSprings now features 53 pools, with 16 different water formulas to replicate iconic bathing locations around the world. By using engineered mixtures of waters from the La Verkin hot springs and available freshwater sources, WorldSprings has duplicated popular baths like Vichy in France, the Dead Sea of southwestern Asia and the Blue Lagoon in Iceland.

## La Verkin Sulphur Springs History

The 1918 opening marked the beginning of commercial bathing at Sulphur Springs, but its history goes back to use by Native Americans, who revered the rugged area as sacred and the wa-

ters as healing.

Volcanic activity in prehistoric times left a cleft in the lava flows where sulphur-laden hot water bubbles up to join the La Verkin Creek to form what is now the Virgin River. Legend has it that Spanish explorers Father Dominguez and Father Escalante camped near the site and named the stream Rio Sulfureo. Later Spanish explorers renamed the river for the Virgin Mary.

Early Mormon pioneer Thomas Judd was the first to own land near Sulphur Springs, where he envisioned a large cattle operation when he passed through in his travels around 1888. He and his men dammed the stream with "a little cement," creating an early recreation spot for settlers and workers on the Hurricane Canal, a vital waterway that made settlement of the valley possible.

Early in 1918, an entrepreneurial-minded group of men met in St. George and formed the La Verkin Sanitorium and Resort Co., leading to the first of many commercial ventures in the canyon. Twenty Dixie residents were recruited as stockholders, pledging \$100 each to the venture.

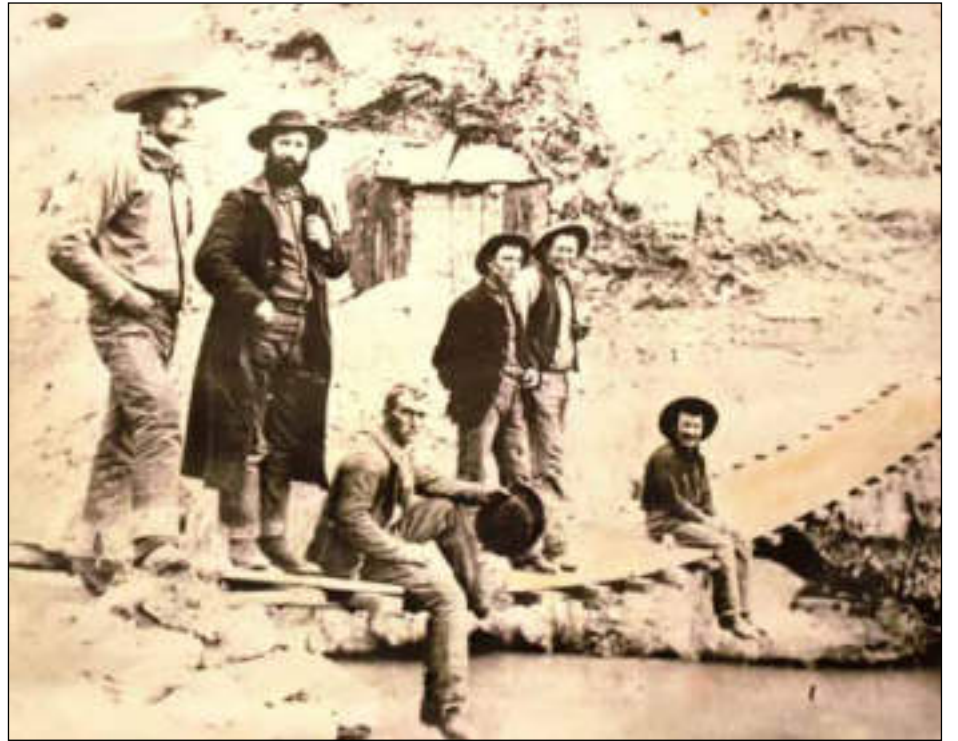
In the subsequent century, many iterations of Sulphur Springs have come and gone. Dozens of management organizations have worked to keep the resort open and attractive, with varying degrees of success.

## Enter WorldSprings

At the 2024 Global Wellness Summit in St. Andrews, Scotland, Christopher Barrett, CEO of WorldSprings, spoke of his plans to bring water-based wellness to everyone. His co-founder, Steve Beckley, had been approached by leaders in La Verkin, hoping to reopen public access to the geothermal waters of La Verkin Sulphur Springs — then called Pah Tempe.

On July 15, WorldSprings opened its Southern Utah resort.

"Zion Canyon Hot Springs is a unique wellness destination and a great new addition to the growing Southwest Utah region," Beckley told Spa Business digital magazine. "The guest experience combines proven wellness practices, including mineral hot springs, cold-plunge therapy, barrel saunas and more, to create a sanctuary against the stunning backdrop of Zion National Park.



About 1900, workers on the Hurricane Canal gather on a bridge near the site where the waters of the La Verkin Sulphur Springs join the Virgin River. The mineral waters provided a much-needed recreational venue for early settlers in the area. (Photo courtesy Washington County Historical Society)

"From the size and scope to the fully new water system designed to supply and return water to our property, purified to its original source, this is our most ambitious property yet," Beckley added. "We've gained many insights from WorldSprings' 10 years of operation and we're excited to continue bringing restorative waters across the U.S."

Zion Canyon Hot Springs has 53 bodies of water, including 32 natural hot spring pools, three barrel saunas, three cold-plunge pools, two freshwater pools (including a large one for families) and a whirlpool. The water for the spa is sourced from the underground mineral springs that feed the Virgin River. The hot springs produce 7 million gallons of water a day and reach temperatures up to 107 degrees Fahrenheit.

WorldSprings' pumps bring the water to the pools and provide a complete changeover every two hours. The water is filtered and treated to neutralize any sulfuric odors. Once the spring water has been used, it undergoes a final filtration process before being returned to the Virgin River.

Zion Canyon Hot Springs sports a family-friendly area, with a snack bar and locally produced food and drinks. Fourteen of the facility's hot spring

pools, the large freshwater pool and a cold-plunge and barrel sauna are located in the family area.

An area for adults over 21 has a cafe and full-service bar by a fire pit. This zone has 18 of the mineral hot spring pools and all 16 of the world-inspired pools.

The new resort is managed by Ronald Neumann, whose experience includes opening multiple indoor water parks and family entertainment centers across the country. He managed properties for such brands as Great Wolf Lodge and Five Star Parks.

"We're excited to open what will be a premier hot springs destination in the U.S. and welcome guests to an oasis where they can relax, rejuvenate and connect with nature," said Neumann. "I have opened and led luxury properties in Colorado, Washington, Illinois, Georgia and Arizona, and the Greater Zion community stands out as an incredible partner for their excitement and hospitality."

Zion Canyon Hot Springs offers discounts for Washington County residents, with introductory prices as low as \$39.

And the dress code has been modernized since those early mineral bath seekers frequented the site.



Opened in mid-July, the Zion Canyon Hot Springs resort near La Verkin features 53 pools fed by waters from nearby natural hot springs. (Photo courtesy WorldSprings)



Drone view of the new Zion Canyon Hot Springs resort in Southern Utah shows some of the 53 pools featured on the site. The resort opened in mid-July. (Photo courtesy WorldSprings)



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