

Pancheri overpass project completed successfully

It was a huge success.

That was the assessment of Engineering Manager Karen Hiatt and others regarding the Pancheri Drive overpass project.

Here's why:

- Innovation
- Coordination
- Efficiency
- Workmanship

The project furthered ITD missions of safety, mobility and economic opportunity.

Innovation

"I think it was about three years ago that EIT (engineer in training) Mike McKee asked to participate in this complex project," Karen says.

"He wasn't our most experienced designer, but he had a strong desire to learn and we let him be involved in survey and materials report writing through his rotations in the district. He then became the lead designer of the project as he moved into Project Development."

The undertaking included reconstructing 700 feet of Skyline Drive and installation of water and sewer infrastructure, light poles, and a new traffic signal at Pancheri and Skyline drives.

"Using Microstation (computer-aided design [CAD] software), he modeled subsurface utilities in three dimensions, something we had never done before.

"Mike was able to rotate and turn the computer model to better show subsurface utilities and their points of conflict," she says. "His love of

learning and of tinkering with new things helped with design."

Ben Burke, former Project Development engineer, and Ryan Day, veteran designer and transportation staff engineer assistant in the section, helped Mike along the way.

District 6 also planned a new type of traffic control on Interstate 15 (see **Innovation furthers safety...**, page 7).

Coordination

Good coordination among teams epitomized the project from start to finish, Karen says.

Project Development employees coordinated well with other design participants. Everyone helped complete the project.

Other design participants included: Bridge Design in Boise (overpass); Project Development, Materials, Traffic, Property Management and Environmental Planning in Rigby (approaches, pavement and traffic signal); city of Idaho Falls (water and sewer infrastructure, lighting and landscaping); and Idaho Falls Power (lift station).

Coordination? Yeah.

Construction Engineer Wade Allen, of Residency A, maintained good relations with the contractor, HK Contractors Inc., of Idaho Falls.

This was a large project with no significant change orders and no construction claims, Karen notes.

"Effective coordination enabled us to get a lot of work done in a short amount of time," Wade says.

"It was amazing to complete such a

large project in one construction season," Engineer Associate Bryan Young, of Residency A, says.

Efficiency

Property Manager Mark Layton was "remarkable," Karen says.

Working with Senior Right of Way Agent Janet Brown, who traveled from Headquarters in Boise to Rigby each week for months to help with land acquisition, Mark closed deals efficiently so the project could stay on schedule.

"I pushed Mark every chance I could," she says. "He got it done."

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Public notification

This is the eighth in a series of articles on how to complete a highway project.

Idaho citizens have high expectations for their transportation system. They rightfully expect to be involved in decisions and want to be informed about construction projects that impact their travel. It's part of shared ownership.

Meeting those expectations requires a strong commitment by ITD to public involvement and to an ongoing and steady effort to keep citizens informed.

Traffic control signs and markers announce construction ahead, but most people want advance notice – they want to know what to expect as early as possible.

Issuing news releases and posting alerts and updates on the Idaho

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Dan Smith, Leon Thornton, Jeremy Johnson, Blake Rindlisbacher, Derrick Royer and Matt Davison at the luncheon in Idaho Falls.

District 6 honors employees for service milestones

District 6 Engineer Blake Rindlisbacher presented service awards to employees at the employee benefit luncheon Oct. 31 (Halloween) at the Chuck-a-Rama café.

5 Years

Travis Legan, Idaho Falls
Mike McKee, Project Development
Darwin Smout, Residency A
Gregg Bowman, Residency A
Matthew French, Port of Entry
Sheldon Jones, Leadore

10 Years

Leon Thornton, Residency B
Derrick Royer, Ashton
Matthew Davison, Residency B
Jeremy Johnson, Mackay
Mark Layton, Property Management
Dan Smith, Leadore

15 Years

Don Randall, Information Systems
Helen Brown, Supply Operations
Ron Miller, Shop
Bill Shaw, Planning, Management
Tim Cramer, Environmental

20 years

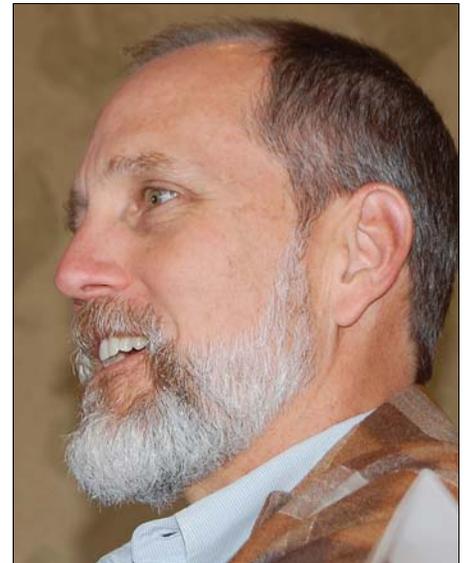
Darren Doss, Shop
Wade Allen, Residency A

25 Years

Scott Carpenter, Mud Lake

30 Years

Gary Johnson, Project Development. ■



Clockwise from upper left: Bob Shaffer, Mackay; Ken Hahn, Maintenance Operations; Scott England, Leadore; Randy Edie, Shop; Clark Moon, Sugar City; Lucas Richins, Driggs; and Shannon Esser, Arco. Ninety-two employees attended the fall luncheon.

Public information specialists announce projects

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Traveler Services website (511.idaho.gov) is the job of the public information specialist, who looks both at the big picture and at the intricate details.

Formal announcements advance ITD missions of safety, mobility and economic opportunity. They also inspire public trust and confidence. ITD's public outreach includes describing projects on the ITD website, posting construction notes on Facebook and Twitter and responding to media inquiries.

On large construction projects, ITD holds open houses, disseminating information and obtaining design input from local residents. District 6 representatives also travel to county seats and other communities for meetings with local officials, announcing and coordinating construction and maintenance projects.

Facts

Media announcements include essential information, such as: "Construction on U.S. 20 north of Rexburg starts Monday (May 7). Crews will resurface 2.5 miles of highway between the South Fork Teton River Bridge and north Rexburg interchange (Exit 337)."

Announcements cite traffic restrictions: "Travel will be reduced to one lane in each direction, and the speed limit will be reduced to 55 mph."

They also caution motorists: "Drivers should anticipate merging traffic, uneven surfaces and construction workers and equipment."

And they provide pertinent details: "Work will start on westbound U.S. 20 at the north Rexburg interchange (Exit 337) and proceed west, with work on eastbound U.S. 20 to begin at the South Fork Teton River Bridge later in the week."



Our Mission. Your Safety. Your Mobility. Your Economic Opportunity.

Idaho Transportation Department

News Release

5/9/2012

Contact:
Bruce King
Public Information Specialist
(208) 745-5611

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Drilling to close Del Rio Bridge east of St. Anthony starting Monday (May 14)

RIGBY - Drilling will close the Del Rio Bridge on the U.S. 20 business loop east of St. Anthony between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. starting **Monday (May 14)**, the Idaho Transportation Department announced. Drilling is expected to be completed and the bridge reopened for daytime use by Friday evening (May 18).

Crews will drill into the earth near piers and abutments to determine structural (bearing) capacity of the ground in preparation for bridge replacement planned in 2014. Prior to constructing a bridge, the transportation department gathers and tests samples of the subsurface materials to determine the type of foundation needed, whether it be "spread footings" or steel piles driven into bedrock.

The department will place portable electronic message boards on U.S. 20 to notify the public of next week's planned closure. Motorists may want to consider taking an alternative route to travel between North St. Anthony and 2600 East in Fremont County.

Drivers should watch for construction workers and equipment, and obey all traffic signs.

ITD and the Idaho State Police advise motorists to slow down and pay attention when driving in work zones, where increased speeding fines and other penalties apply. Motorists are encouraged to plan ahead and dial 5-1-1 or visit 511.idaho.gov for information on the state highway or interstate system.

Above is a news release issued on bridge work.

They note benefits: "Repaving improves safety and comfort for motorists, and extends the life of the highway surface."

Announcements also list contact information: "Contact Bruce King (208-745-5611), public information specialist."

Jargon

In preparing announcements, public information specialists use plain English. Instead of *rehabilitate*, it's *resurface* or *pave*. The specialists avoid jargon such as *clear and grub*, *crack and seat*, and *CRABS*. If including the terms is necessary, they explain them.

Richard Saul Wurman, in *Follow the Yellow Brick Road*, says: "Expertise in a particular field sometimes precludes an ability to understand what the uninitiated user needs to know about [it]."

Said another way: "The field cannot well be seen from within the field." (Ralph Waldo Emerson)

Clarity

Obscure writing hinders understanding.

Consider this example from Washington state:

"We have been notified that you did not receive the State of Washington

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Replacing the Pancheri Drive overpass south of Idaho Falls obviously required detailed engineering to ensure elevations and alignments were right.

West of the bridge, designers calculated seven points of elevation at 50-foot intervals, Mike says.

This was to enable parabolic (rounded) crowns for the road surface rather than the two-percent slopes from centerline normally used.

The goal here was to reduce the amount of right of way ITD needed to buy.

Workmanship

Wade's team ensured product quality, Karen says.

"This wasn't your easy-to-manage, 4-10 schedule," she says.

Inspectors worked nights and weekends to monitor construction, which continued seven days a week.

To meet the added workload, Construction Engineer Matt Davison, of Residency B, assigned his inspector Joe Kopplow to assist Residency A inspectors Mike Poole and Rich Asbury with the long hours.

Maintenance Operations Manager Ken Hahn also assigned Mike Harvey, Idaho Falls shed, to test gravel, plant mix and concrete.

"HK and their subcontractors were great to work with," Lead Inspector Mike Poole says. "They got in and completed the work."

"Inspectors Mike Stoddart and Don Zenner from District 5 helped immensely with slope staking and structure grades," Rich says. "They brought a high level of expertise to our work."

Competent inspection paid off in workmanship.

Mobility

Throughout the project, District 6 maintained travel on Pancheri Drive at one lane in each direction and access to businesses and residences.

Construction site July 6.

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Part of the project was rerouting Pioneer Road, which required closing the route at its intersection with Pancheri Drive. Motorists still could access Pioneer Road from Sunnyside Road.

“Slowing rather than rerouting or stopping night traffic on I-15 (see **Innovation furthers safety...**, page 7) prevented long delays,” Wade says. “We worked hard to minimize inconvenience for travelers.”

Widening the corridor already has reduced congestion on Pancheri Drive, especially between Utah Avenue and Skyline Drive as intended.

Accolades

“I love the new bridge,” Idaho Falls resident Ted Milton says. “Crossing it’s a delight.”

All is forgiven by folks impatient to have the new overpass completed.

ITD sponsored an open house on the planned replacement June 30, 2009, attended by 69 people. Most folks were excited about the project and couldn’t wait for it to be done, many having traversed the narrow, bumpy, old bridge with no sidewalk for decades.

“Routing Pioneer Road under the east end of the new bridge to connect with Milligan Road is wonderful,” said Kittie Sieh, who lives on South Pioneer Road.

Idaho Falls Engineering Administrator Chris Fredricksen praised District 6 for excellent design, coordination and construction. He received several positive comments from citizens.

Teamwork

“I am very proud of our employees,” Karen says. “Everyone stepped up to the challenge.

“It was a tight schedule. We had to submit the PS&E [plan, specification and estimate] to Boise in time to construct the project in one season. Everybody contributed and pushed their work along.”

Design started in 2009, with construction beginning May 21 of this year. HK Contractors finished the \$9 million project Nov. 15, and will seal-coat the new pavement next summer.

The new bridge includes two lanes of traffic and a bike/pedestrian path in each direction of travel, a boon for motorists, bicyclists and joggers alike.

The Pancheri overpass truly was a monument to teamwork. ■

Photo courtesy of Rich Asbury



Worker prepares forms for column of new Pancheri Drive overpass south of Idaho Falls. In background is old Pancheri Drive overpass.



Photo courtesy of Bryan Young

Crews place girders for new Pancheri Drive overpass Aug. 20, at 11:15 p.m. Working at night minimized traffic disruptions.

Innovation furthers safety, mobility on Interstate 15

A plan to keep traffic safe and moving worked like a charm.

District 6 slowed rather than rerouted or stopped night traffic on Interstate 15 to place girders for the new Pancheri Drive overpass south of Idaho Falls and to remove the old bridge adjacent to it.

Idaho State Police and ITD contractor pilot cars slowed traffic intermittently to 25 miles per hour or less between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., creating a recurring 20-minute gap in traffic so construction crews could perform overhead work without endangering motorists.

Traffic control included blocking on-ramps in the slow-down area until pilot vehicles had passed and directing traffic on the on-ramps. District 6 informed the public of slowdowns via news releases and postings on the Idaho Traveler Services Web and phone system (511).

News reports and 511 posts directed commercial drivers transporting permitted loads wider than 14 feet to contact the resident engineer at District 6 in Rigby 24 hours in advance for special authorization to pass through the construction zone.

District 6 slowed rather than rerouted or stopped night traffic on I-15.

The creative traffic control plan worked as hoped, protecting and minimizing inconvenience for travelers. The final slowdown was at 3 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 27.

Thanks to District 6 designers, who conceived the plan, and construction staff of Residency A, who implemented it. A big thanks also to ISP

for making available officers to work night shifts with ITD personnel.

Keeping motorists safe and moving, District 6 furthered ITD missions of safety, mobility and economic opportunity. ■

Photo courtesy of Rich Asbury



Subcontractor guides girder into place.

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warrant listed on the attached Affidavit of Lost or Destroyed Warrant Request for Replacement, form F242.”

Translation: “Have you cashed your check yet?”

Writing experts help the audience: “Crews will install rumble strips (grooves placed along paved shoulders as a safety feature). When tires pass over the grooves, the vibration (rumbling) alerts drivers of drifting.”



Public Information Specialist
Bruce King

Rules

Public information staff members observe rules of good, clear news-writing: grammar, punctuation, style and tone.

Each is important.

The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual is the “Bible” for editorial style – to which editors cling.

Without rules there is no order.

Editors in the Office of Communications at ITD Headquarters approve all district news releases, while editors at news outlets tweak the wording.

The urge to ~~edit revise polish~~ refine another’s writing is irresistible, especially for a seasoned editor.

A story that violates generally accepted standards for writing draws criticism, if not delays and perhaps rejection.

Much of the confusion surrounding what is proper language stems from pockets of society making up their own editorial rules.

Book Learnin’

Public information workers generally hold a bachelor’s degree in journalism, public relations or advertising and have newsroom experience.

They know pyramid writing style, headline and feature writing, layout

and design, and photography.

Of course, there is much more to desktop publishing than the basic rules of presentation – it’s about words and how to put them together for comprehension.

It is one thing to throw words on paper. It is quite another to arrange them in a way that informs, educates and, when appropriate, entertains.

“... the nonfiction writer ... can do all kinds of things wrong. He is endlessly accountable: to the facts, to the people he is writing about, to his ‘quotes,’ to the mood, to the ethical nuances of the story.

“He also is accountable to his readers. They won’t tolerate being delayed, lost, confused, bored or taken down unnecessary trails by failures of craft.

“Fiction may still be worshiped on the slopes of Parnassus as the higher form. But writing good nonfiction is in many ways a harder and more exacting work.” – William Zinsser

Summation

Conveying the right message at the right time in the right way is challenging, but vital.

Clear, relevant and timely construction reports increase awareness and foster mutual understanding, good will and support.

The public information specialist not only informs the public of road conditions and work impacts, but also of challenges in maintaining the state highway system.

This employee translates engineering and business terminology into plain language to encourage shared grasp and esprit de corps, producing clear, relevant and timely statements and articles that improve awareness, processes and policy.

Ultimately, the position measures performance to improve it, thus furthering efficient operations and product quality. ■

Comings & Goings

New employees are Melissa Stewart, technical records specialist, who works in the Front Office of District 6 headquarters.



Also joining the district is Wade Schroeder, Port of Entry, who works at Sage Junction, by way of St. Anthony, Florida and Rexburg.



Departing employees: Jackie Cole, technical records specialist, Rigby office. She took a position at ISU.



New arrivals: Andrew William McKee, new son of Mike McKee, Project Development.

Both son and mother Kirsten are fine. Mike and his family make their home in Idaho Falls.



Titus King Williams, new grandson of Troy Williams and Bruce King, Planning and Public Involvement (son of Tyson and Sarah Williams of Idaho Falls). Family is doing great.

Bennett joins spray day

Paul Bennett, Vegetation, participated in a spray day sponsored by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game Sept. 26.



He took District 6’s 1,800 gallon weed spray vehicle to supply water to crews applying herbicide to state property northeast of Mud Lake.

Crews included the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Forest Service, Clark County Weed Department, and Jefferson County Weed Department.

Many hands make weeds go away.

Paul said the event was a meaningful and productive project, which he enjoyed.