Inside the RNC

6 WAYS ODOT WAS READY

PHOTO BY ERIN FRYZ, DISTRICT 12
ASK THE DIRECTOR

Q: I heard recently that ODOT is moving from a “worst first” policy to a “taking care of what we have” policy when it comes to our roads and bridges. How will this “asset management plan” work?

A: Ninety-three percent of ODOT’s capital program is spent on preservation. Even in the past decade, which included two record capital fiscal year construction programs of just under $2.5 billion, we only added 1.3 percent in new capacity miles to our transportation infrastructure system.

Under our new asset management approach, we intend to become even more preservation-oriented. This new approach will mean taking care of what we have in order to extend the life cycle of the roads and bridges, and our other assets. This new program includes an innovative three-pronged approach.

First, ODOT has spent the past 10 years moving to a more data-focused method of managing and improving our transportation system. We are now going to use state-of-the-art technology to improve our decision-making. This department is going to continuously interact with our front line crews, our contractors, and our local governments to share information and benefit from their first-hand, practical expertise and knowledge. Over 5.5 million people rely on the ODOT system every day for their jobs.

Second, ODOT has adopted much more aggressive preservation treatments. This more proactive approach will mean more micro-surfacing, crack sealing and chip sealing in order to make our roads and bridges last longer, rather than just waiting for them to fail. We are also going to proactively clean and seal bridges to keep joints, side structures, surfaces, and drains in good repair to extend surface life.

Third, as a department, we are going to have more collaboration between our construction and maintenance forces. We are now going to coordinate our capital and maintenance work in a more centralized fashion with input and advise from the districts and local officials.

In addition, our Transportation Information Mapping System or TIMS has been developed to become a robust data source with the latest on ODOT facilities, roads and bridges, airports, traffic, ports, transit systems, culverts, safety barriers, railroads, intermodal facilities, and much more.

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Finally, ODOT’s Pavement Management System software now conducts an in-depth analysis of road conditions to determine road resurfacing priorities with the highest benefit at the lowest cost.

One team TOGETHER

David Rose, Central Office

WORKPLACE CULTURE

Vendor Selection

By Pieter Wykoff, Central Office

From time to time, people have questioned how ODOT selects the vendors it decides to do business with. When suspicions arise, investigations into the selection process have been launched.

In 2007, the Ohio Inspector General and the Ohio Highway Patrol received a tip that there were irregularities in the District 12 Facilities and Equipment divisions’ purchasing and procurement apparatus. After an 18-month investigation, they found that, “The two departments were co-conspiring with fraud, corruption and depravity,” that few of the contract relationships maintained with dozens of vendors, “were arms-length or untainted by personal greed.”

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The Inspector General’s report said that nearly $400,000 in “gratuities and other improper payments” were made to three ODOT employees by nearly three dozen ODOT vendors. The report also said that nearly $11 million in “questionable or improper payments” made to ODOT vendors were the result of bid-rigging or fraud.

As a result of the investigation, seven ODOT employees were fired or forced to resign. Nine people, including five ODOT employees, were indicted. All of them were sentenced to prison.

ODOT Director Jerry Wray pointed out that vendors and contractors are audited both internally and externally. While it may take some time, we have systems and processes in place and they work. Any illegal behavior will be uncovered and dealt with.

If we come across something that’s suspicious, we will investigate it,” said Wray. “We have our own ODOT investigative unit in the Chief Legal Council’s Office. If we suspect something is going on, we’ll invite the Inspector General in and cooperate with them completely.”
Both of us worked at ODOT in the 90s and then came back recently. To me, it seems to be a different kind of ODOT.

It’s leaner. Director Wray did a lot to depoliticize ODOT and make it a professional organization. It’s about doing good work and being a good public servant and leaving the system better than when we showed up. I sense that from highway techs, all the way up to district construction engineers, and everybody in between.

When we started back in the early 90s, all of the DDDs were engineers. Things have changed quite a bit.

There are several DDDs, including myself, who are not engineers. What I like about the organization is that it allows other professionals with other leadership experiences and skill sets to apply those to an engineering organization. I have an MBA and a degree in planning, and I’m really close on my doctorate. The engineering professionals here have tutored me along the way. They have taught me how to manage a surface transportation system.

“It’s good meeting the young, enthusiastic people . . . There’s a sense of mission that is even stronger than when I left.”

In June, ODOT Director Jerry Wray appointed Jack Marchbanks the deputy director for ODOT District 6. It’s familiar territory for Marchbanks, who served as the head of that same district from 1997 to 2007. We spoke to him about his return.

Is this almost like coming home again?

Yes, in the sense that the home is still there. There’s a lot of new members that have shown up. It’s good meeting the young, enthusiastic people, along with the not-so-young but still enthusiastic people. There’s a sense of mission that is even stronger than when I left.

You’ve served a number of years on the Ohio Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC). How will that affect your job?

It allows me to serve at the 35,000-foot level, as well as at the crop duster level in regards to the funding needs. I’ve gleaned from my five years on the TRAC some really excellent ideas for innovative financing, many of them coming from the private sector. I come back with more to offer and more to contribute as a team leader and as a steward.

As one of Ohio’s largest agencies, ODOT awards more than 1,000 contracts annually to contractors, consultants and other private entities. Our economic impact to the economy is substantial, considering we do more than $2 billion in contracts each year. And by law, the department must adhere to federal and state guidelines throughout the contract process, specifically as it relates to small, disadvantaged and minority-owned businesses. To improve this process and ensure the department is a leader in this area, the Division of Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) was created on July 1, 2015. With a goal to promote diversity and provide equitable opportunities, both internally and externally, ODI is split into three offices: Office of Equal Opportunity, Office of Outreach and Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise. Since its inception, ODI initiated the Disparity Study, to identify and remove the barriers that separate small and disadvantaged businesses from highway construction and engineering opportunities. Upon completion of the study, Director Wray submitted a letter to FHWA to implement a more targeted goal so that the state may create stronger parity and expanded opportunities for small and disadvantaged business enterprises within the heavy highway construction and engineering industries.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS UPDATE

CSF SPOTLIGHT:

PEOPLE

DBE
Participation by certified DBE firms on federally funded construction contracts directly related to ODOT core functions.

EDGE
Participation by certified EDGE firms on state-funded construction contracts directly related to ODOT core functions.

MBE
Percent of operating budget in categories determined by DAS that is awarded to MBEs.

Excellence in Government
Disadvantaged Business Enterprise

**HOW IS IT CALCULATED?**
The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) metric measures the percentage of participation by certified DBE firms on federally funded construction and construction-related services (consultant) contracts which are directly related to ODOT core business functions, i.e., planning and designing new roadways, building and maintaining the roadway system, etc.

The resulting DBE participation percentage is compared to the stated goal for the contract and to the program’s overall goal. The overall goal is 8.9 percent and individual project goals may range from 0 percent to 15 percent or more DBE participation.

Encouraging Diversity, Growth, and Equity

**HOW IS IT CALCULATED?**
The Encouraging Diversity, Growth, and Equity (EDGE) metric measures the percentage of participation by certified EDGE firms on state-funded construction and construction-related services (consultant) contracts which are directly related to ODOT core business functions—i.e., planning and designing new roadways, building and maintaining the roadway system, etc.

The resulting EDGE participation percentage is compared to the stated goal for the contract and to the program’s overall goal. The overall goal is 5 percent and individual project goals may range from 0 percent to 15 percent or more EDGE participation.

Minority Business Enterprise

**HOW IS IT CALCULATED?**
The Ohio Revised Code requires that state agencies set aside 15 percent of their projected operating spend in specific categories to include only certified Minority Business Enterprises (MBE).

The Results

A lot has been done since ODI launched last July. A year later and the results are clear: the opportunity to do business with the department is greater and easier than ever before for all stakeholders. This was no accident. The department made a concerted effort to not only be a leader in promoting diversity and providing equitable opportunities across the state, but nationally when compared to other DOTs.

- **DBE Audit:** ODOT hired an independent consultant to review its DBE contractor lists to make sure all firms in the system accurately align with their work category designations as well as the required parameters of control, independence, and ownership.
- **Outreach events:** In 2015, ODOT hosted more than 20 disparity study, town hall, and one-on-one matchmaking meetings followed by a growing number of 50/50DBE opportunity meetings around the state. In 2016, ODOT has already been involved in more than 20 outreach events, including a Construction Symposium in Cincinnati that was attended by 200 businesses and several local officials, including the city’s mayor. A Civil Rights Symposium is planned for April 2017 as the centerpiece of outreach for the year.
- **Engineering Consultant Developmental Goals:** On selected projects, consultants who present a plan for developing a DBE or EDGE firm will receive additional consideration for selection and will be able to recover the direct and indirect costs incurred for specific training and assistance to the DBE/EDGE firm through the life of the agreement.
- **MBE Participation:** In fiscal year 2015, ODOT achieved a 22.94 percent cumulative MBE spend, exceeding the department’s goal of 20 percent and the state’s goal of 15 percent.

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The Division of Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) recently recognized ten ODOT employees as the first to receive the ODI Champion Spotlight Award. They were nominated for the award by ODI or their supervisors for their contributions to communication, processing, compliance or education to advance diversity and inclusion at ODOT.

“We created this award to give recognition to individuals who have impacted opportunity, diversity and inclusion at our department,” says ODI Deputy Director Lauren Purdy. “We are hoping to change the culture at ODOT so that this is not just viewed as a Central Office function, but a statewide function.”

The division plans to give out the ODI Champion awards twice a year.

### Security

- **ODOT System Conditions**
  - **Bridges: General Appraisal** (Fiscal Year Annually)
    - Average rating of bridge conditions. Each ODOT maintained bridge is rated on a scale of 0-9; 0 = out of service, 9 = new.
    - 32,688 76%
  - **Pavements: Priority System** (Fiscal Year Annually)
    - ODOT measures the average pavement conditions for all interstates and four-lane divided highways (Priority); rural, two-lane U.S. and state routes outside of cities (General); and U.S. and state routes inside of cities (Urban). The ratings are on a scale of 0-100, with 100 being brand new pavement.
    - 79.72 80%

- **ODOT’s First ‘ODI Champions’**
  - **Amada McFarland**
    - Public Information Officer
    - District 12
  - **Apollo Perez**
    - Body Repair Worker 2
    - District 7
  - **Clint Bishop**
    - Transportation Engineer 4
    - Construction Administration
  - **Domingo Martinez**
    - Transportation Manager 3
    - District 8
  - **James Grillo**
    - Transportation Engineer 2
    - District 8

### Safety

- **Fatalities (Jan 2016-Mar 2016)** (Calendar Year Annually)
  - Current number of motor vehicle incidents that have occurred on the ODOT System roadway (all interstates and U.S. or State Routes outside of cities) in the current calendar year. Year-to-date goals are based on a 1 percent reduction of fatalities from the average of five previous years.
  - 97 YTD 100%

- **ODOT Contract Program ($ Billions)** (Fiscal Year Annually)
  - Total construction and maintenance contracts awarded and to be awarded for the fiscal year on ODOT and local agency projects.
  - 38 $1.22B
  - 36 $1.13B

### Capital Program

- **ODOT Let Projects Awarded On-Time** (Fiscal Year Quarterly)
  - Percentage of department or local contract construction projects let by their target date.
  - 34 95.1%
  - 34 90%

- **Preventable Change Orders** (Fiscal Year Annually)
  - Cumulative dollar amount of preventable change orders over the total construction program dollar amount.
  - 0.2% 1.5%

### An Enterprising Solution

Paul Pegher, Central Office

In June, ODOT and the state of Ohio signed a $33 million contract with IBM to implement OAKSenterprise: a massive technical upgrade that will affect many of ODOT’s business sections. By July, the ODOT and IBM were at work on this complex project scheduled for completion in 2018.

Over the years, areas such as Finance, Human Resources, Facilities, and Capital Project Management developed separate applications and technical systems for conducting their business. OAKSenterprise will modernize these aging systems and integrate them on a single system.

In part, the need came from ODOT’s strategic technology plan after many years of discussion among the divisions that would benefit from the project. It is also the first of its kind in a statewide plan that will eventually reach all agencies, and therefore involves close collaboration with the Office of Budget Management and the Department of Administrative Services.

“OAKSenterprise is ODOT’s largest ever non-construction project,” says Anne Fornshill, assistant director of Business and Human Resources and the project’s executive sponsor.

“It represents a true milestone in our history, as we improve efficiencies for ourselves and our business partners.” Naturally, a project of this scope will change the way many people perform their jobs. To help them understand and prepare for change before it occurs, ODOT is taking a new approach through “change management,” a process designed to support the “people side” of project management. Four representatives from each district, one for each impacted business unit, have signed on as change agents to serve as liaisons between their divisions and the project team.

Executive sponsor Anne Fornshill wants everyone to understand the intent of this preparation: “We must be very clear that OAKSenterprise is not designed to trim our workforce. The basis of some jobs may change as a result, but ultimately this project will help us develop efficiencies to work smarter for the state of Ohio.”
THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Amanda McFarland, District 12

The city of Cleveland hosted the 2016 Republican National Convention in July. The event drew thousands of out-of-state visitors and propelled the city onto the national scene. ODOT played a part by providing a vital transportation link between hotel clusters and downtown Cleveland. By maintaining the free-flow of traffic and helping local authorities with any and all highway incidents as needed, the department helped the city pull off the event smoothly. Here is a snapshot of what ODOT did.

ODOT’S ROLE

ASSISTANCE IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
ODOT worked with local authorities to temporarily reconfigure the I-90/E.9th Street exit and Ontario Street exit to better accommodate traffic.

ACCESS TO EQUIPMENT
ODOT utilized several portable “light plants” to provide illumination around the Quicken Loans Arena. Extra lighting helped attendees during evening hours.

ACCESS TO PARKING
Within downtown Cleveland, surface parking space was at a premium. ODOT took advantage of the ongoing George V. Voinovich Bridge project to provide storage and parking lots for cars and buses.

INCREASED LITTER CONTROL
ODOT increased its own litter control operations and partnered with Cleveland and other organizations to expand volunteer-driven clean-ups.

INCREASED FREEWAY SAFETY PATROLS (FSP)
ODOT expanded the existing patrols in Cleveland and Akron metro areas to assist motorists during minor highway incidents during the convention. The FSP kept traffic moving.

24-HOUR SHIFTS
ODOT facilities in northeast Ohio were staffed round-the-clock to patch potholes, remove graffiti, clear storm sewers and catch basins, repair guardrail, and perform roadway sweeping operations. Keeping the highways neat and clean and operating created a positive impression of the city and safety for all.

VEGETATION DEVASTATION

Mandi Dillon, District 7

The Montgomery County garage recently hosted a Field Day, with Administrator Bob Lenser and crews joined by employees from districts 1, 2 and 3. Scott Lucas and Jill Martindale from Central Office were also on hand for a familiar battle in transportation: the fight to control wild plants along Ohio highways.

Davey Resources, a vegetation management company, had been hired by ODOT as part of the statewide research program. Those present in Montgomery County were there to review various projects and sites throughout the state where Davey was conducting research on different herbicides and mowing methods.

A highlight of the day was the demonstrations of District 7’s slope mowers, used to clear vegetation from areas with extreme hills and angles. One mower in particular can be operated by a remote control, allowing employees to safely clear weeds and growth from steep interchanges. The participants compared the performance of this mower alongside another ride-along model to determine which was most beneficial.

Final reports on these efforts are expected to be available this winter.
So you’re a project manager; what do you do?

If you are Craig Devore, with District 3’s P&E Design Section, you are responsible for ensuring as many as 25 to 30 of your district’s construction projects are delivered on time.

You participate in scope field reviews and help create the scope document. You manage projects through their design, plan preparation, estimating phases. You see that the plan package documents are filed with the Office of Contracts. And during construction, you answer questions from the project engineers or contractors. Simply put, without your diligent efforts, many of these projects would not be delivered on time.

“Project managers play a critical role in ensuring the roadways and structures under our care are maintained,” Devore asserts, “by establishing a schedule and holding everyone to that schedule so a project can be built when needed.”

Devore’s commitment to public service doesn’t stop with his contributions at ODOT. He is currently serving our state and country as a major in the Ohio Air National Guard. His military career began in 1987 with four years of active duty in the Air Force. He then transferred to the Ohio Air National Guard’s 179th Airlift Wing, Civil Engineering Squadron. In 2008, Craig joined the 200th RED HORSE Squadron, and was deployed to the Middle East two years later as part of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. His unit designed and built support projects for the troops, such as roads, airfield pavements, buildings and even a chapel.

“America is a great country,” said Devore. “I enjoy the freedoms that we have here and I feel it’s important to defend those freedoms.”