Wyandot/Crawford U.S. 30

Construction of an improved U.S. Route 30 from Upper Sandusky to Bucyrus began in July. The new 11.1-mile, four-lane, divided highway is the second of five phases which will upgrade the current two-lane U.S. 30 corridor between Beaverdam in Allen County and Bucyrus in Crawford County. Gov. Bob Taft and ODOT Director Gordon Proctor commemorated the groundbreaking for the project. At $75 million, the Wyandot/Crawford U.S. 30 project is the largest project dollar wise ever constructed in the district. At the time of its sale the project was the largest roadway project ever let to bid in the history of ODOT.

Interstate 75 Pavement Repair

The district completed an innovative pavement rehabilitation project this fall on a section of Interstate 75 in Hancock County. The project restricted the times the contractor could close lanes, required all lanes to be open to traffic for the weekends and included monetary incentives for an early finish.

“We knew the weekends were the heaviest travel periods on this stretch of the interstate. We purposely structured the contract around that fact to keep backups to a minimum,” said Norman R. Redick, district deputy director.

This project was also the first extensive use in Ohio of the dowel bar retrofit repair method that involved placing steel rods across cracks in the pavement. The rods tied the sections on either side of the crack together keeping the slabs from moving separately under the weight of traffic.

Cradle to Grave Project Management Process

The district demonstrated its commitment to quality principles by using the Quality Services Through Partnership process in its development of a project management strategy referred to as Cradle to Grave which documents how a project is managed from beginning to end.

“The Cradle to Grave strategy requires the individual players in the project management process to sit down and discuss the process,” said Kirk Slusher, planning and programs administrator.

For example, the idea of analyzing the entire project management process came from a discussion with Dan Kaseman, district production administrator.

“We thought we knew what needed to be done at every step of the project management process, but there were things we were forgetting,” said Slusher. “Now when we have a question about when something needs to be done or who should do it, we go back to the manual and find the answer,” he said.

Rural Transit Systems

Four new rural transit systems were initiated in the following counties: Greene, Harrison, Seneca and Sandusky. ODOT has been working with local governments to provide transit service in counties that don’t have service.

The Office of Transit established an Internet bulletin board for the rural transit systems to improve the exchange information and ideas.

Airport Pavement

The Office of Aviation converted the technical pavement data to a user friendly format and made state-wide airport pavement management information available to airport sponsors through the Internet. On-line access to pavement management information enabled airport sponsors to understand the priority surfaces for preventive maintenance, repair or rehabilitation, increasing the effectiveness of limited program funds. Stronger focus on runways over the last two years resulted in a 2 percent decrease in deficient airport pavements in 2001.
### Office

#### Mimicking What Works

Last year, ODOT conducted an audit of six states to improve departmental construction administration activities. Operations within the DOT’s in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin were analyzed – and ODOT is using the findings to improve its processes. Findings of the audit are the basis of several of this year’s departmental strategic initiatives.

The study was significant not only because of the knowledge gained from other states, but because of the benchmarking that came with comparing and contrasting other DOTs with ODOT. The report was published in November and offices throughout ODOT are implementing the resulting best practices.

#### IP Phone Solution

The Department of Information Technology’s Network Administration Section completed the replacement of the existing Mitel Phone Switch with a new IP Phone Solution.

This solution integrates into the department’s existing Voice-over IP Implementation, reducing the amount of time needed by the district personnel to maintain their phone system. The Network Administration Section also completed the installation of another IP Phone solution for the Maumee River Crossing Project Field Office.

### District Two

#### Maumee River Crossing Project Begins

Construction on three road-widening projects on Interstate 280, between Interstate 75 and State Route 2 (Navarre Avenue) in Toledo, began in 2001. These three projects will widen I-280 from four to six lanes, and will bring I-280 up to modern interstate design standards. Gov. Taft was in Toledo in June to break ground on the MRC project.

#### Toledo’s Maumee River Crossing cable stayed bridge, scheduled for completion in 2003, will carry six lanes of traffic and include shoulders; have a minimum 12-foot vertical clearance above the river; have a minimum 400-foot horizontal opening.

#### Interstate 75 Safety Improvements

Interstate 75 in downtown Toledo received extensive traffic safety upgrades this summer. These safety upgrades, which included new asphalt open graded friction course, epoxy pavement markings, advisory signs with flashing beacons, highly reflective chevrons, and radar-based speed signs, were implemented in an effort to reduce crashes and improve safety on a section of I-75 which, for various reasons, had been prone to accidents during wet/inclement weather. The district will continue to monitor these locations to determine the effectiveness of the implemented safety improvements.

#### Henry County Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping Project

The district’s Henry County garage recently inventoried all culverts and crossover pipes on all state and U.S. routes in the county. The culverts were recorded by route, straight line mile, type of culvert (concrete, galvanized metal, clay, plastic, etc.), and were given a score from one to five, with five being new and a one being poor.

This list of pipes and culverts will be used in a GIS mapping pilot program. Additionally, the list will be used during field reviews of upcoming resurfacing projects.
100 Percent Delivery Rate

The district had a 100 percent on-time delivery of 38 projects worth approximately $188 million. This large program included projects ranging from a $40 million relocation and widening project involving U.S. Route 30 in Crawford County to a $20,000 demolition project in Wayne County. In the Local Let Program, the district also sold $12.3 million in federal monies of $13 million in these local projects, with 81 percent of on-time delivery.

District 3 had five construction projects, totaling more than $170 million, occurring on Interstate 71 projects during the 2001 construction season in Ashland, Medina, and Richland counties. These projects are part of the state of Ohio’s overall 10-year plan to reconstruct the entire I-71 corridor between Cleveland and Columbus.

I-71 Corridor Coordination

Over the course of 2001, the district organized and conducted a series of meetings which allowed its construction and design partners to share feedback with ODOT personnel. Information gathered through this process will be incorporated into future Interstate 71 projects. The information will also be valuable throughout the department as other interstate reconstruction programs are developed.

In addition to the I-71 inter-disciplined, public-private effort, the first I-71 project (located in Ashland County, from U.S. Route 250 to the Richland County line) was completed and opened to the public one year ahead of the original scheduled completion date.

Labor/Management Cooperation

As a follow-up to department-wide cooperative Labor/Management training, the district working with the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association (OCSEA), secured a $54,000 Work Force Fund training grant for the purpose of cascading a cooperative labor/management approach throughout the district. This training will involve all district co-workers and work units and represents the largest single grant in the history of the work force fund program.

Operational Performance Index

The Operational Performance Index, a sufficiency rating system was developed for all roadways in Ohio. This system created a scoring system according to geometric standards, conditions, and usage of all roads. This tool will be used in prioritizing needs and making decisions for pavement and bridge improvements.

Videolog System

A new Digital Videolog system was developed by the Office of Technical Services which enables digital images of the roadway to be taken and made available on the network for easier access. This enables ODOT staff to view all roadways in Ohio as if they were driving on the road without leaving their office.
Office

Modular Conversion Pilot

The Office of Facilities oversaw the installment of the first of a new kind of roadside rest area to serve the public. The office launched a pilot program to improve several primitive, non-flush rest areas along secondary routes within the state. Although needed by the public, these areas are a problem to keep clean and could potentially harm the environment. The office replaced the primitive facilities with a new modular conversion building. These preassembled units can be secured in place and connected to plumbing and electrical resources within four hours.

The new flush facilities are significantly less expensive than creating the traditional type of rest area building. Conversions are also reusable. The first of these buildings was installed in August on U.S. Route 24, 11 miles west of Defiance in Paulding County, more are planned for 2002.

District Four

Construction Inspection Process Revamped

Districts statewide will benefit from a new construction inspection process for Local Traditional Projects, which was recently proposed by District Four. In the past, districts have provided construction inspection to local agencies from their pavement program when a project sold. The cost of this work was reimbursed to ODOT by the local governments from the project funds. This reimbursement would not be returned to the district’s budget, but instead would be dispersed to the ODOT general fund.

The new procedure has multiple benefits. Instead of reimbursement, local governments will be asked to pay the estimated funds for inspection up front. The districts will then hire a consultant to conduct the work, which will not only allow ODOT inspectors more time to work on ODOT projects, but will also avoid using pavement or bridge funding to pay for these costs.

A Measure of Success

Three innovative methods were used during the 2001 construction season that yielded successful results. By including an incentive in the original contract, the district was able to complete the White Pond bridge replacement and rehabilitation project within 130 days.

Finishing 20 days ahead of schedule, the contractor worked around the clock and received $300,000 in incentives compensation.

The completion of the King Graves interchange in Trumbull County nearly one year ahead of schedule was the result of Value Engineering. The project began in November 2000 with an expected completion for the summer 2002. However, the contractor proposed to accelerate the schedule and move the completion date to November 2001 at an increased cost of $97,500. This interchange, vital to the economic development of the area, was opened nearly one year earlier than originally planned.

A third project, the Lake Milton Bridge reconstruction, originally was planned with the intent of metalizing the existing steel beams. However, the district saved approximately $4 million by including an alternate option in which contractors bid on metalizing the steel beams or could bid building new concrete beams. The cost of concrete beams was significantly less and resulted in a direct savings for the Major Bridge Program.

“Expanding trade opportunities in northeast Ohio is key to greater economic development. The opening of the King Graves interchange will create greater air-to-ground freight access to the area, enabling increased shipping capability for manufacturers and distributors. The interchange is a victory for northeast Ohio.” – Gov. Bob Taft
Central

Snow and Ice Best Practice

Equipped with eight brine spreading vehicles, Coshocton County has been able to get ahead of snow storms by spreading salt brine, or salt water, before an actual storm hits. The brine allows the sodium chloride to stick to the road and will melt the snow and ice much quicker than using the sodium chloride alone. Mark Sharrock, Coshocton county manager, said, “Using the salt brine gives us faster results as we can treat twice as many lane miles in half the time.” This technique has resulted in a savings last year for the county of nearly $40,000 in salt money.

Money Saving Ideas

Through the Innovation ODOT Program 29 suggestions were accepted for implementation resulting in a savings of $438,000. Some of these suggestions include posting training opportunities on the internal Web site, creating a computer program for construction paving projects which increased productive time for project personnel, and advertising a toll-free number in district rest areas to increase response times.

Excellence at District 5

In February, the district’s strengths and weaknesses were assessed for the Ohio Award for Excellence (OAE) in the areas of Leadership, Strategic Planning, Customer Focus, Information and Analysis, Human Resource Focus, Process Management, and Organizational Results. More than 50 employees (management and bargaining unit) were invited to attend the OAE orientation and were asked to identify key areas each felt needed to be improved.

From these interviews, an action plan was created to focus on the eight key areas recognized by the employees, and has been closely monitored by the district’s Quality Steering Committee. To date, five out of the eight areas identified on the action plan have been implemented and will be continuously monitored. This new way of doing business has improved communication and will move the district team toward meeting the department’s goals and initiatives.

ODOT Library’s Online Catalog Available to OhioLINK

The ODOT Library’s online catalog, now merged with the State Library of Ohio’s online system, became available to OhioLINK members in September 2001. The entire collection was processed and bar-coded over a three-year period. The department’s catalogue can now can be borrowed by any of the 79 Ohio college and university libraries and the State Library which make up the OhioLINK network.

OhioLINK offers access to more than 31 million library items statewide. Resources held by the OhioLINK institutions are also available to ODOT employees with a State Library/ODOT Library borrower’s card. The online system is accessible from ODOT’s Intranet site under The Office of Quality & Human Resources.

Signs of Change

Throughout 2001, district’s traffic department recognized it was maintaining far more signs that it was actually using. An inventory-reducing effort began by weeding out the signs that were used the least. The traffic department found that it was much cheaper and quicker to receive specialty signs from ODOT’s sign warehouse. By stocking only those signs that were needed on a regular basis, the department realized a cost savings of an estimated $148,000.
Reducing Congestion Top Priority

In June, the district launched the first freeway service patrol in central Ohio. The Freeway Incident Response Service Team or FIRST patrols Columbus-area interstates and major highways looking for stranded motorists, accidents or spills and helps clear them quickly.

The district has also invested $10 million in advanced technology to reduce congestion on Interstate 71 through Columbus. The new Freeway Management System uses weather and pavement sensors, traffic cameras, ramp meters and freeway message signs to detect and relay real-time traffic information to motorists.

Similar freeway management systems across the nation have increased the ability to carry more cars and trucks on highways by 15 to 25 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Key Highway Projects Completed Ahead of Schedule

In December, the district completed construction on three key Columbus-area highways. During the 2001 construction season, the district rebuilt and reopened stretches of Interstates 71 and 70 and State Route 315 — all ahead of schedule.

"Over the past four years, ODOT has invested more than $400 million in central Ohio to rebuild and add capacity to our aging, overburdened highways," said Jack Marchbanks, ODOT District 6 deputy director. Combined, the projects represent nearly 25 miles of reconstruction on some of the most heavily traveled highways in the state. The district invested several million dollars to accelerate work.

New Web Cams Big Success

District 6 unveiled a new Web Cam system which provided real-time images via the Internet. The 16 traffic cameras, placed in strategic locations on the I-70/I-71 corridor approaching and within the downtown Columbus construction zone, offered timely traffic information to help motorists assess traffic patterns and adjust their route based on traffic flow.

The system is the first of its kind in central Ohio and will likely be expanded to other work zones next year. To minimize costs and improve the efficiency of transmitting the information, snapshot images of the highway were posted to the I-70 reconstruction Web site (www.i-70.org) every few seconds.
Central District Seven

Project Delivery

Over the past year, District Deputy Director William L. Harrison ensured measures were taken to aggressively manage the delivery of the fiscal year 2002 (FY02) construction program. “To date, District 7 has filed 60 of the 69 total ODOT projects due for FY02, each one achieving 100 percent on-time delivery,” said Ramona Mihalyo, production administrator for District 7. “For non-traditional projects, the district has filed 11 of 24 due in FY02, achieving 90 percent on-time delivery.” The District 7 FY02 program, as a whole, is comprised of 81 projects totaling approximately $100 million.

Improved Communication

The district office implemented an initiative to increase communication between its offices of Production and Construction.

“Production designers will routinely visit all construction sites on a pre-scheduled basis throughout the construction process itself,” said said Ramona Mihalyo, production administrator for District 7. “The plan designers interact with front line construction personnel to review the need for any significant change orders and formulate alternatives where possible to help reduce the number of overall change orders on projects. This provides a big boost to the coordination and cooperation necessary between the two offices to achieve mutual district Ohio Performance Index goals.”

Freight Impact Analysis

ODOT commissioned a $353,000 study that will provide a clear picture of current freight movements in Ohio and trend projections for the next 20 years. The state’s location makes it central to the movement of freight because Ohio is located within 600 miles of nearly 70 percent of America’s manufacturing capacity. The study will help to determine how this freight is impacting the state’s highway network. “We are one of a handful of states beginning to look in depth at freight analysis,” said ODOT Corridor and Urban Planning Administrator Suzann Gad. “Good planning is based on good facts. This study will produce a freight profile for Ohio that will help us identify and address the needs of our freight customers.”

Domestic Truck Freight Flow To and From Ohio

5.5 percent of all U.S. truck traffic utilizes Ohio’s highways system

Sources: Based on 1998 Transearch data, map by Cambridge Systematics
Office

Change Management Process

The Division of Information Technology (DoIT) implemented a controlled process for managing incoming work requests, user expectations and division resources. Users requesting service from the division enter their requests through an Intranet Web site, where they are assigned to the appropriate person or group. Each project will be completed through a standardized process, with stages completed within established time frames. The requestor is kept informed of all stages of development, and has access to the project at all times.

By receiving requests through a single source and developing projects according to a structured plan, DoIT has improved timeliness and accountability to its customers.

District Eight

Customer Focus

The district opened its own Quality Resource Center in August. The purpose of the Quality Resource Center is to give employees a central location where they can gather helpful information. The center contains two computers, a color printer, telephone, TV, VCR, and has numerous reference books, audio tapes and video tapes that can be checked out. “Having the right tools can make the difference between spinning your wheels and making strides in our quest for a quality environment,” explained Sue Collins, management quality coordinator for the district.

The center is staffed on a rotating basis by members of the Quality Steering Committee, quality facilitators, and other employees. It is open to everyone, not just employees working on a quality team. Supporters of the Quality Resource Center hope it will generate more quality teams and help quality become more ingrained into the culture of the district.

As part of ITS project planning ramp meters are being evaluated. Recent studies show ramp meters significantly improve freeway operations. In Minnesota, a study revealed without ramp metering, freeway travel times increased by 12 percent, while crashes increased by 24 percent.

Intelligent Transportation Systems

To the benefit of Cincinnati motorists, the district expanded the Advanced Regional Traffic Interactive Management and Information System (ARTIMIS) to a round the clock operation. ARTIMIS is an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) that uses state of the art technology to retrieve and communicate traffic information to motorists. Covering more than 160 miles of freeways and expressways in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky, ARTIMIS alerts motorists to traffic delays throughout the region. Previously the ARTIMIS Control Center operated 13 hours a day, five days a week. “The expansion was made with minimal cost increases to the system but resulted in major benefits to the traveling public,” said Joe Bassil, traffic maintenance engineer for the district.

Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance

The district has been able to reduce its equipment repairs backlog from 500 hours to less than 300 hours. To improve its service, the district developed a response team, created repair schedules and established deadlines for completing required repairs.

As a result of these changes, heavy equipment and dump trucks on average are returned to service within six days -- cars, trucks and other rolling stock are returned to service within three days.
Partnering in Successful SR220 Construction

The district partnered with the Ohio Department of Development and Mill’s Pride, a manufacturing company in Waverly on a State Route 220 construction project in Pike County. High traffic volumes on SR 220 because of an area industrial park and dangerous bend in the road near a railroad crossing caused an increasing safety hazard.

Through the partnering agreement, impacts to the community were minimized, funding was secured and the route reopened approximately six-weeks ahead of the original schedule.

Conference Calls

The Division of Information Technology (DoIT) implemented a monthly practice of engaging in conference calls with computer personnel in ODOT’s district offices. These calls, conducted by Deputy Director Shobna Varma, enable the sharing of information and concerns between Central Office and districts. The sessions increase communication and allow important issues to be addressed.

New Materials Testing Method

A new method of materials testing was adopted and implemented by the Office of Materials Management. Traditionally, ODOT tested all materials in-house. Now, the focus will be on quality acceptance and quality control - ODOT will evaluate contractor’s processes for testing and materials will be accepted based upon contractor’s ability to provide materials that meet departmental standards.

This change will allow the office to focus its efforts on research. By not testing each material at ODOT, time can be spent exploring more broad issues of research and investigation. As a result of this change, the roles of many materials personnel is shifting to that of a researcher instead of a product tester.

Transportation Review Advisory Council

The Transportation Review Advisory Council (TRAC) ended its fourth funding cycle with 65 projects worth $2.8 billion either planned or under construction. In early December, the nine-man panel overseeing the funding of major new construction projects allocated $20 million for development of eight projects.

Rebuilding U.S. Grant Bridge

In August the existing U.S. Grant Bridge was demolished marking the beginning of construction of a new, cable-stayed bridge. The District 9 bridge carries U.S. Route 23 across the Ohio river between Portsmouth and South Shore, KY.

The new bridge will be built in the same location as the previous bridge, its center span will be 825 feet and is expected to be completed in June 2004. Additionally, a commemorative display consisting of salvaged items from the previous structure will be created serving as a memorial to the original U.S. Grant bridge.
Office

**Workforce Development Grant**

The Statewide Labor/Management Committee was awarded a Workforce Development Grant of $172,250 to train personnel in all districts and Central Office in labor/management relationships, interest-based problem-solving, and committee effectiveness.

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District 10

**OAE/OPI/County Monthly Planning Session Roll Out**

A “Quality Train” was rolled out at the district over the course of three weeks in July. These roll out sessions were an opportunity for employees to learn more about the Ohio Award for Excellence (OAE); the Organizational Performance Index (OPI), Customer Complaint Process and Customer Survey results; and about the district’s initiative to empower their employees in helping develop their county’s monthly work plan. The goal of these sessions was to unify the district in its approach to building, maintaining, and repairing state routes. County Managers and their employees will be meeting on a monthly basis and decide how best to utilize their resources to meet the needs of the customer and eliminate OPI deficiencies.

This new process is a part of the changes that are occurring in District 10. District Deputy Director, George Collins said “This foundation is now the building block for the district and its employees.”

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**Five Major New Projects**

One of District 10’s greatest accomplishments is the sale of five major new alignment projects totalling $124.6 million. These five projects, three on Meigs State Route 124 and two on U.S. Route 33, create nearly 30 miles of safer, quicker, accessible corridors between Columbus and Charleston, W. Va.

These corridors are extremely important to the region from an economic development standpoint and have been actively pursued for years by local officials and special interest groups. Therefore, being able to deliver, sell and begin construction on these corridors has been a very satisfying and proud accomplishment for the district.

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**District 10 Shines at Team Up ODOT**

District 10 took home four out of six of the awards presented at this year’s Team Up ODOT ceremony held in Columbus in early May.

The presentation was part of the department’s inaugural Total ODOT Performance (TOP) awards. The TOP awards were developed to recognize individuals and teams in ODOT who show an ability and desire to perform above their required duties, and the initiative to improve their own performance. District 10 employees earning awards include Vinton County Highway Worker David Stiffler, who received the Outstanding Customer Service Award; Washington County Highway Worker Willa O’Neill received the MVP Award; Christine Davis, executive secretary to the District 10 deputy director, received the Communication Award; and District 10 received Great Strides Award.

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**2001 Innovation Ohio Agency of the Year Award**

For the seventh consecutive year, ODOT was named “Agency of the Year” by Innovation Ohio. As of Dec. 31, 2001, Innovation ODOT received 638 suggestions, with 171 accepted for implementation. The accepted suggestions generated a cost savings of more than $1.08 million. More than 12 percent of ODOT’s employees participated in the program in 2001.

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**ODOT Quality Assessment**

In 2001, ODOT completed an organization-wide Quality Assessment. Each district and Central Office division received a report of their progress in the use of quality tools and principles as measured by the criteria for the Ohio Award for Excellence.

The assessments included the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, information analysis, human resource focus, process management and organizational results.

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The assessments included the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, information analysis, human resource focus, process management and organizational results.
Customer Feedback

ODOT wants to know how it’s doing, and how its services are perceived by motorists. This summer, the district distributed customer surveys and comment cards at each of its county fairs. A total of 293 surveys were filled out and returned. Ninety-two percent of those returned rated the services ODOT provided on state routes last winter during snow and ice removal to be either Good, Very Good or Excellent, and 96.5 percent of the respondents rated their overall opinion of the services provided by ODOT as either Good, Very Good or Excellent. These surveys will be used annually to gather information and compare the information received. It is also being analyzed by the district’s Customer Service Committee as well as the Organizational Results Committee to determine trends and areas for improvement.

Citizenship Committee

As part of the district’s Ohio Award for Excellence (OAE), the district formed a Citizenship Committee. One of the committee’s tasks is to organize a list of the nonprofit and charitable activities or organizations District 11 employees either already actively participate in or are interested in joining or helping with a cause. Additionally, a Community Involvement Scrapbook will be developed highlighting the work of district employees.

District Surpasses Combined Charitable Campaign Goal

The district surpassed its goal for this year’s Combined Charitable Campaign by more 250 percent. The district raised approximately $17,000 in donations to this year’s campaign, including a lump sum contribution of $2,700 by the Union to the September 11th Fund.

State-of-the-Art Phone and Voice Mail Systems

As part of a statewide plan to convert ODOT’s voice infrastructure to VoIP or voice over a data network, the district, with the assistance of the Central Office Division of Information Technology’s Network Administration Section, installed a new VoIP phone and voicemail system to replace its outdated and hard-to-use system. A QStP team worked together to develop system requirements and a policy on the use of the new system. As a result the QStP team’s conclusions and the assistance from ODOT’s Network Administrator Manager Spencer Wood, the district decided to replace its existing system with a Cisco VoIP solution. The district now has a highly upgradeable, easy to manage, feature-rich system that will reduce the cost of district phone lines.

Electronic Personnel Action Team

A team, consisting of employees from the Office of Personnel, was formed in 2001 to improve the Personnel Action (PA) process. PA forms are required to initiate and document any employment activity significantly affecting an employee’s state service record. The team developed new electronic methods for creating PA forms. The new methods save input time, and help to reduce errors while giving its users highly effective tools for tracking and recording PA forms and attachments.

For their efforts, the team received the Governor’s Silver Award of Excellence at Ohio’s Quality Showcase in October.

Improved Worker’s Compensation Claim Tracking

The Office of Personnel replaced its 20-year-old electronic system for recording and tracking Worker’s Compensation injuries with a new system in 2001. The Prognos Program was adapted by the Division of Information Technology to meet the needs of the department. Prognos gives its users greater access to more than 8,000 claims, and can obtain information electronically from both the Bureau of Worker’s Compensation and healthcare providers. The Office of Personnel is looking to incorporate disability and FMLA records into this system.
100 Percent Construction Finalization

A major accomplishment for the district’s construction office was attaining a 100 percent rating for Construction Finalization in the period ending Dec. 1, 2001. The overall measure for this goal is based on the Organizational Performance Index (OPI) for the legal closure of the 68 contracts finalized from June of 2000 to June of 2001. The measure for Construction Finalization was introduced with Strategic Initiative Five in 1997 for proactive maintenance and construction practices that assure safe, reliable travel conditions and its objective that 90 percent of all construction projects be finalized within six months of project completion.

In November 1997, the district had finalized 9.4 percent of the projects completed and continuous improvements were developed and implemented to achieve a 54 percent rate of finalization in August 2000. “The drive to attain an 100 percent rating was achieved through the contributions of everyone in the construction area,” said Randall Over, P.E., district construction engineer. “From the project engineers, inspectors and highway workers at the field offices, to the administrative staff, area engineers and test lab personnel in the district office, we all understood that it must be done.”

Labor-Management Committee Effectiveness Training

ODOT and the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association (OCSEA) recently received a grant awarded by the Workforce Development Steering Committee to assess and train Labor-Management and Health and Safety Committee. The district’s training, Labor-Management Committee Effectiveness Training, was administered in June by Columbus Area Labor-Management Committee (CALMC). CALMC is a not-for-profit organization that promotes the development of high performance organizations through the joint participation of labor and management.

Prevailing themes of the training included: Understanding Competitiveness and Change, Understanding Group Process, Understanding Labor-Management Cooperation, Basic Cooperative Tools, Other Cooperative Techniques and Building Effective Committee Foundations. This training was preceded by a pre-assessment and proceeded by the facilitation of two team meetings. CALMC issued a report included a summary and final recommendations for the districts and Central Office using data from the pre-assessment, training and facilitation.

The District 12 assessment highlights the positive relationship that is shared between labor and management. As noted in the report, “It was clear from the pre-assessment meeting that labor-management cooperation and employee involvement were already present in the district.”

Traffic Control

Accomplishments of the Office of Traffic Control include the establishment of the systematic sign replacement program, development of a traffic signal inventory system (OSIS), development of a PC-based strain pole analysis program (SWISS), expansion of the Logo program to include a fifth category (Attractions), the overhaul of portable changeable message sign (PCMS) prequalification process, and the publication of the preventive maintenance policy.

Long-range Strategic Plan

The Division of Facilities and Equipment Management has completed its first long-range strategic plan for county garage, rest area and outpost building replacements. This program will provide much-needed direction on the repair, cost and location of these facilities statewide.
Keeping Ohio Competitive

Last year ODOT again produced a record construction program at $1.2 billion. More than 100 major projects – those costing $1 million or more – were completed in 2001. These projects include a $78 million reconstruction of Interstate 70 between downtown Columbus and Fairfield County and a $51 million to reconstruct Interstate 71 between State Route 161 in Franklin County and U.S. Route 36 in Delaware County. An additional $34.8 million went toward rebuilding I-71 in Ashland County, and $34 million was used to renovate 42 bridges and resurface pavement on Interstate 75 in downtown Dayton. These projects will help to reduce travel times, lower transportation costs, improve safety and keep Ohio an attractive business location.

Ohio Department of Transportation
Construction / Maintenance Contracts Sold

Systems Integration

The department made great strides in integrating various separate information systems. The department maintains a Base Highway Reference System, a Traffic Signal System, a Ramp Inventory System and others to electronically keep track of the department’s various duties.

These data collections have largely existed separately, but ODOT’s Division of Information Technology has been working to bring them together using new applications. These improvements mean the department can consider its assets together as an integrated whole when making future plans.

Six-state Audit Report

Last year, ODOT conducted an audit of six different states to improve departmental construction administration activities. Operations within the DOT’s in Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin were analyzed – and ODOT is using the findings to improve its processes. Findings of the audit are the basis of several of the department’s strategic initiatives, in an effort to continually improve ODOT’s construction practices.

The study was significant not only because of the knowledge gained from other states, but because of the benchmarking that came with comparing and contrasting other DOTs with ODOT. The report was published in November and offices throughout ODOT are implementing the resulting best practices.

Streamlined OPI Monthly Update Process

The Division of Facilities and Equipment Management has implemented a system which streamlines the monthly Facility Management Operational Performance Index (OPI) calculations, input and submission process. The districts complete simple computerized building assessment forms whenever changes or updates are made to any buildings. The system generates both the building assessment score and monthly OPI numbers, which are then submitted to Central Office through the Division of Facilities and Equipment Management Webpage.
Office

Condition Assessments

The Division of Facilities and Equipment Management has completed its assessments of more than 235 buildings statewide, including county garages, rest areas and outpost facilities. These assessments have been entered into a database, and are provide the basis for fact-based project planning for facility repairs. The assessments also provided the foundation for the Facility Management Operational Performance Index measurements.

Local Projects

The number of ODOT’s locally administered projects has increased from 85 totaling $123 million last year to 202 projects totaling $262 million this year.

This program was designed to allow locals to design and administer the construction of local transportation projects and money.

Celebrating Ohio’s Bicentennial

ODOT and the Ohio Bicentennial Commission have teamed to work with Ohio’s communities to place corporation markers throughout the state. The signs originally appeared in more than 250 communities along state and national highways for Ohio’s 1953 Sesquicentennial. The commemorative signs provided motorists interesting and unique historical community facts. During the past five decades many of the signs have been destroyed or damaged. The partnership will help to replace or repair the original signs and will also enable markers to be provided to communities that did not receive them in 1953.

Central Office

Improving Safety at RR Crossings

In an effort to bolster safety at railroad crossings on Ohio’s roads, ODOT has been helping local governments put rumble strips at crossings without gates or lights.

During an event at a rail crossing in Fulton County, ODOT Director Gordon Proctor and State Rep. Steven Buehrer (R-Delta) announced the availability of funding for local governments to install rumble strips or other safety features at Ohio’s crossings without gates or lights has been expanded to include any unprotected crossing. ODOT offered a grant of $1,500 per crossing to all local jurisdictions requesting the installation of rumble strips and other crossing safety improvements.

Rail Grade Separation

Under the direction of Governor Bob Taft, ODOT developed its $200 million Railroad Grade Separation Program to build overpasses at critical locations across Ohio. Nearly 40 overpasses will be constructed to improve safety and convenience along high-volume railroads in Ohio.

2001 Rail Grade Separation Program

Tier I and Tier II Projects

[Map of Ohio showing rail lines and project locations]
January, 2002

Dear Colleagues,

This annual Accomplishments issue of the Transcript showcases many of the achievements of the past year and we have a lot to be proud of. As you can see, in 2001 we achieved a number of goals that have directly contributed to our success.

Work toward our strategic initiatives in 2001 guided us through a record-breaking $1.2 billion construction season. This milestone is a result of the efforts of the entire department’s professionalism, dedication and hard work.

I continue to routinely receive praise for the work the department is doing from state and local leaders, news reporters, and Ohio’s taxpayers. Your contributions to Ohio’s transportation system are widely appreciated and acknowledged.

As we continue to improve the efficiency and quality of service we provide, your efforts are making a difference to Ohioans. I appreciate all of the work you have done to maintain, expand and improve Ohio’s massive transportation system and keep our roads safe for the traveling public.

Respectfully,

Gordon Proctor
Director