

econnections



July 2006

The electronic newsletter of MoDOT District 4, Kansas City Area

MEETINGS/TRAINING

Tuesday, July 11

Missouri State Highways and Transportation Commission, St. Louis

Wednesday, July 12, Room 236E

Job Status, District 1, 8-9:30 a.m., videoconf.
Job Status, Group 1, 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Job Status, Group 2, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Job Status, Group 3, 12:30-1:30 p.m.
Job Status, Group 4, 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m.

Monday, July 17

Lamson Area Team, time & location to be determined

Tuesday, July 18 - CANCELED

Stock Area Team, 8-10 a.m., 87th Street Project Office

Maintenance Superintendents, 9-11:30 a.m., Room 136E

Thursday, July 20

Management Team, 9-11 a.m. Boardroom

Thursday, July 27

Munck Area Team, 8:30-11:30 a.m., Room 236

EVENTS

Monday, July 10

UMKC Summer Transportation Institute, 10 a.m. -2 p.m., district office

Tuesday, July 18

I-470/US 50 interchange improvements public hearing, 4-7 p.m., Arnold Hall, 123 SE 3rd Street, Lee's Summit

Thursday, July 27

Flintlock overpass public hearing, 4-7 p.m., Liberty Community Center, 1600 S. Withers Rd.

econnections sources

Construction Bev Chrisco, 6341

Design Flo Noear, 0455

Regional Counsel LeAnn Francis, 6382

Administration Judy Magruder, 6309

General Services Toni Terry, 0050

Human Resources Belinda Fite, 6321

Materials Shana Blaylock, 6525

Right of Way Melbra Taylor, 6351

Traffic Dawn Phillips, 0401

Editor Jennifer Benefield, 6328

D4 Team Responds to Clinton Building Collapse

by Steve Porter

A fatal building collapse in Clinton's downtown square brought dozens of rescuers to the site late Monday, June 26. Among them were MoDOT specialists in District 4.

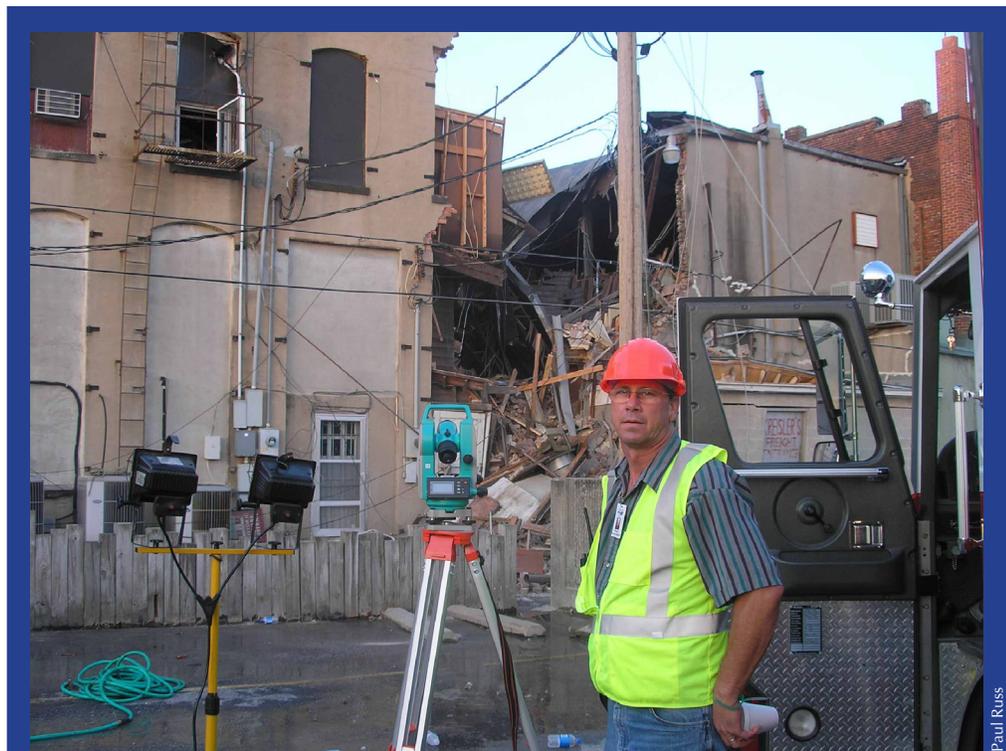
The collapse of the three-story Elks Lodge trapped 10 of 55 people gathered in the building at mid-evening. Ron Faulkenberry, MoDOT maintenance superintendent, his oldest son, Jeff, and Steve Bryant, maintenance supervisor for the Clinton area, were among many MoDOT workers soon on the scene. En route from his home 14 miles away, Faulkenberry called Assistant District Engineer Chris Redline

to authorize trucks, equipment and manpower to aid in the rescue.

Bryant and other MoDOT workers helped establish traffic control with cones and barriers at several intersections near the collapse site. They switched signal lights from blinking to cycle to move traffic on Business Route 13 and helped direct a steady flow of emergency workers toward the scene.

Faulkenberry also called D4 Bridge Maintenance Engineer Paul Russ, who arrived from his Cass County home within an hour to help evaluate whether the fallen debris was structur-

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Maintenance Superintendent Ron Faulkenberry secured MoDOT trucks, equipment and manpower to aid in rescue efforts when a three-story Elk's Lodge building collapsed June 26 in Clinton, Mo. trapping nine and killing one.

Paul Russ

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Building Collapse

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ally sound enough to send in rescuers. Russ and Faulkenberry set up transits to monitor the unsteady wall and detect any shifts that could spell trouble.

"I watched it all night and it didn't move at all on my side," Russ said.

Faulkenberry was on the other side, checking his transit two or three times a minute to make sure workers weren't further endangered.

"It was boring, yet intense," he said of the vigil.

Transportation Project Manager Paul Boenisch and his wife, Donna, also responded to the scene. They are members of Missouri Task Force 1, which is among 28 federal urban search and rescue teams authorized through the Federal Emergency Management Adminis-

tration. The team provides hazard assessment in building collapses and suggests ways to safely work in unstable debris. Although he has worked other building collapses, fires and vehicle crashes, Boenisch (who also serves as a firefighter) said this is the first incident he's assisted in which people were trapped.

Most of MoDOT's workers stayed throughout the night, leaving well after daybreak. Several are members of area volunteer fire departments, including Faulkenberry. By mid-morning Tuesday, all trapped victims except for one were rescued. Several were admitted to regional hospitals, flown there by helicopter ambulances.

Tony Komer, 32, the exalted ruler of the Elks group, died in the building collapse.



Emergency personnel worked throughout the night to rescue nine individuals trapped when an Elk's Lodge building collapsed June 26 in Clinton, Mo.

Paul Russ

MoDOT Employee Takes a Turn Around the Speedway

by Joel Blobaum

Motorist Assist Operator Scott Banes had a good answer ready if his children asked him what he did at work on June 23.

"Oh, I drove a lap around the Kansas Speedway track."

Banes, a self-described "NASCAR nut," jumped at the chance to join a convoy of vehicles in a controlled-speed lap around the Speedway oval. The event was the Kansas City segment of one of the main activities planned to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Interstate system – the reenactment of the first Transcontinental Motor Convoy of 1919.

Lt. Col. Dwight D. Eisenhower participated in the 1919 expedition, which consisted of 81 motorized Army vehicles and about 300 people. After participating in the convoy, and after seeing the autobahns of Germany during World War II, President Eisenhower advocated

building an Interstate highway system in the United States. His dream became a reality when he signed the Federal-Aid Highway Act in 1956.

Following the event at the Speedway, the Kansas segment of the reenactment rejoined the main convoy by traveling north through Missouri on I-35. But not before Banes got to see the Speedway from an insider's point of view.

"This is too cool," Banes said as he eased the Motorist Assist vehicle around the track "I couldn't pass this up. What an opportunity!"

District Engineer Beth Wright and Senior Community Relations Specialist Steve Porter also drove MoDOT vehicles in the one-lap event, which was followed by a safety carnival and speeches by various dignitaries, including MoDOT Director Pete Rahn.



Joel Blobaum



Randall Freeman

"I never thought I'd drive into pit row," Scott Banes remarked as he came to the end of his lap around the Kansas Speedway.

UMKC's STI is Under Way

by Jason Crain

Which career field incorporates science, mathematics, engineering, business, design, and communications?

It's transportation! But transportation was not the expected first answer to this question – a problem that the U.S. Department of Transportation saw among the nation's youth.

Now in its 13th year, the National Summer Transportation Institute introduces high school students to career fields in transportation. The NSTI is among several educational programs the DOT geared toward young people to help them focus on math, science, and technology and prepare them to serve in transportation.

The University of Missouri Kansas City partnered with MoDOT and other organizations to establish their own Kansas City Summer Transportation Institute. The on-campus sessions, which model a college environment, also address the need for a qualified and diverse workforce.

The intense four-week summer program is designed to create awareness and stimulate participants' interest in transportation. The program is open to students in the 9th through the 12th grades, with disabled and minority students encouraged to apply.

"I don't think it's (STI) what they expected," said Dana McGinnie, a Northwest Missouri State University student and counselor for the KCSTI. "They are getting more than what they expected. They are enjoying some hands-on

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Summer Transportation Institute

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activities that are fun, but also educational."

Employees from the program's sponsors lead tours and workshops with the students as they learn about different modes of transportation and the careers affiliated with the industry. The 20 local students enrolled in this summer's STI will visit numerous transportation facilities, including the Downtown Airport, General Motors, KCATA-Metro and MoDOT.

"Just watching the cars being made on the assembly line was really fun," said Devin Coleman, a 13-year-old Pembroke Hill student and an aspiring industrial engineer.



UMKC STI Project Coordinator Mark Ohrenberg (left) and MoDOT Assistant to the District Engineer Sharon Taegel (not pictured) talk with students about various modes of transportation June 15.

Oak Grove Residents Comment on Route F Improvements

by Jennifer Benefield

A public hearing drew 54 people to the Oak Grove Civic Center June 22 to view and comment on preliminary plans to relieve congestion and improve traffic flow along the Route F corridor just south of Interstate 70.

Although convenient to travelers and shoppers, the addition of gas stations, fast food restaurants, a motel, a large truck stop/travel center, and a big box store adjacent to the I-70/Route F interchange generates traffic congestion and causes backups onto the interstate during peak travel periods.

The proposed project calls for the widening of Route F, locally known as Broadway Street, to up to five lanes from I-70 to 10th Street. Additional work would include drainage upgrades, curbs and sidewalks, widening of the eastbound and westbound off-ramps at I-70, widening of the turning radius at the intersection of the East Outer Road and Salem Street, and installation of permanent signals at 12th Street.

In July 2004, 5th Street residents in Oak Grove delivered a petition to District 4 headquarters containing the signatures of 1,145 Missouri citizens requesting that the project not relocate traffic from the I-70 East Outer Road

onto 5th Street. District 4 design staff then developed a variety of designs that honored the citizens' requests.

"We held a meeting in October 2004 and presented five conceptual plans," said Project Manager Allan Ludiker. "We reviewed the public comments, and with the help of District 1, have since developed a preliminary plan we believe will help to relieve congestion, improve traffic flow, and reflects the wishes of the community."

Combined right-of-way and construction costs are estimated at about \$4 million. The project is scheduled to be constructed in 2008 and should address traffic needs for the next 10 to 15 years. Right-of-way staff estimates the project could impact up to 40 properties along the corridor. Although the majority of widening will take place within existing MoDOT right-of-way to minimize land purchases from property owners, temporary easements to accommodate construction will be needed from most.

"Our goal is to limit the impact to property owners as much as possible," said Ludiker. "These types of projects are always a challenge."



A MoDOT canoe trip is planned for August 11-13 One-Eyed Willy's, Bennett Springs, Mo. ~ Niangua River

Canoes: \$30; Rafts: \$75; Tubes: \$10

Camping: \$3/person per night; Cabins: \$45/night (sleeps 3);

Townhouses: \$150/night (sleeps 6)

RSVP by July 11 to Doug Sardeson 816-322-3868 or 816-805-5314

Corporate Ladder

Welcome to District 4

Crew worker Mark Blackmon, Randall Forde, Charles Foster, Bryan Hubbard, Patrick Stewart, Jeffrey Still, John Velaer

Materials inspector David Brown

Construction project office assistant Phyllis Filley

Construction inspector Anthony Gosse

Traffic studies specialist Kevin Manning

Motorist Assist operator Robert Pruitt

Legal secretary Amy Weeks

Promoted

Construction inspector Chad Baldwin, Diana Johnson, Steven Markham, Richard Uptegrove

Intermediate crew worker Brandon Block, Vyrla England, Willam Landsman, Stephen Spire, William Van Dyne

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MoDOT Plays Small Role in July 4th Celebration

by Joel Blobaum

Kansas City's annual Riverfest celebration includes a Fourth of July weekend fireworks and laser light spectacular at Richard L. Berkley Riverfront Park.

MoDOT plays a small but significant role in the festivities that occur in the shadows of the Heart of America and Paseo bridges along the south bank of the Missouri River. The department annually allows the laser lights to be placed on the Heart of America Bridge.

"Organizers wanted to shoot off fireworks from the Heart of America Bridge during the Lewis and Clark celebration two years ago, but liability issues scuttled those plans," said Warren Roberts, D4 Technical Support

Engineer. "They've run the laser lights from the Heart of America Bridge for the last few years."

Placing the equipment on the bridge requires closing a northbound lane for the evening, but Roberts said the event's patrons don't seem to mind.

"As long as we get the word out about the closure, everyone can adjust their route and use the Paseo or Broadway bridges," he said. "With the police helping control traffic around the event, it works out pretty well."



Corporate Ladder

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Promoted

Assistant district maintenance engineer Ryan Brown

Traffic specialist Brandon Daniel

Intermediate construction inspector E.J. Dunkerson, Matthew Haug

Maintenance specialist Herbert Lennox

Senior crew worker Raymond Marley, Jeffrey Taylor

Intermediate construction inspector Craig Skorseth

Intermediate materials technician Maria Stuck

Certified appraiser Scott Thurston

Retired

Senior crew worker Jerry Johnson, Donald Webber

News from Across the District

It's a Boy! congratulations to Intermediate Materials Inspector Rick Wyrick and Senior Right of Way Specialist Lori Wyrick. Brody Lucas was born June 28 at 6:05 p.m. He weighed 6 lbs. 11 oz. and was 19.5 inches long.



Jason Crain

Kearney Mayor Bill Dane, MoDOT Area Engineer Kirsten Munck, Clay County Commissioner Craig Porter and Missouri Representative Doug Ervin are joined by Kearney community members who cut the ribbon celebrating the opening of an improved Route 33. The late June ceremony marking the \$4 million, 1½-mile project was held in conjunction with Kearney's sesquicentennial.

Condolences: our prayers are with the families of striping crew member Grover Chapman and Intermediate Information Specialist Henry Uti.

Grover's sister, Patricia Johnson, passed away

June 19. Cash contributions to help the family defray funeral expenses would be greatly appreciated. Please see Rhonda Durham in

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MoDOT's Intern Program Looking Toward the Future

by Jason Crain

Summertime is here! For most adults that means absolutely nothing except for a change in the weather. But for students, it means a break from a year's worth of school – as well as parties, vacations, and summer jobs.

District 4 is employing 10 enthused and anxious college students for summer internships. Working in a multiple fields, from construction sites to the district headquarters, these young men are gaining work experience while providing a helpful addition to the MoDOT staff:

- Michael Giles, automotive technology, Longview Community College
- Jason Neal, engineering, University of Kansas
- Jonathan Kaiser, civil engineering, University of Missouri
- Johnny Swartz, automotive technology, State Fair Community College
- Isaac Ferguson, civil engineering, University of Missouri at Rolla
- Ryan Livingston, civil engineering, University of Iowa
- Bret Cox, automotive technology, State Fair Community College
- Joshua Tinkley, civil engineering, University of Missouri at Rolla

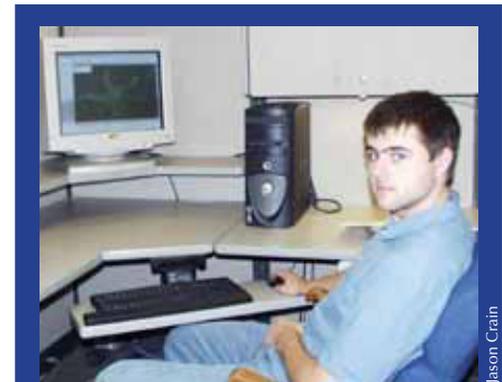
- Joseph Presswood, civil engineering, University of Kansas
- Jason Crain, marketing and Spanish major, Morehouse College

Interns receive hands-on training relevant to their particular area of study, and earn money doing it. The students are like any other worker at MoDOT. They attend meetings, work out in the field, and use all of the skills that they are studying in school.

"It's a win/win situation. We get a dependable worker that can assist with repairs and they get real life experience in the shop," said Mechanics Supervisor Maurice Jones. "It's the lifeblood of our department. There is a shortage of technicians. If we can catch them early, fresh out of college, maybe they will think more about joining us here."

In addition to the automotive program, MoDOT offers internships and cooperative education programs in civil engineering, accounting, computer science, journalism and communications, and business administration. Wages are determined by the number of credit hours students have earned and their number of summers in the program.

"This is a good experience," said Jason Neal,



Jason Crain

University of Missouri at Rolla civil engineering major Joshua Tinkley works on an Interstate 470 project during his summer internship at MoDOT.

who is spending his summer at the Truman Road Project Office. "I'm really learning a lot about day-to-day interaction between public and private sectors and I enjoy working with the contractors."

Their real-world summer experiences are showing these students the expectations and responsibilities of working at the state level. And they might also be marking the beginning of their careers with MoDOT!

District News

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Former Senior Crew Worker Danny Williams plans to spend more time hunting and fishing after retiring with 30 years of service in June.



Photo: Ed Nichols

Striping at Stadium 816-356-8013 or Dawn Phillips in District Office Traffic 816-622-0401.

Henry's father, Nigerian Chief Patrick I. Ut, passed away June 26.

Above & Beyond Update: Area Engineer Jesse Skinner and District Traffic Engineer Tom Evans are the most recent recipients of District 4's traveling trophy for extraordinary effort. Jesse was cited for his ongoing efforts to answer questions and deal with requests from elected officials. Tom earned the special recognition for his fast response to the city of Concordia's concerns about new signs along Interstate 70.

Team Player: Procurement Supervisor Robin Warren received a One Team Award certificate in June. Robin's co-workers nominated her for the honor, which cites its recipients for "consistent excellence and dedication to providing exemplary service to fellow employees and department customers."

Kudos: to Senior Transportation Planner Josh Scott who was featured discussing the proposed diverging diamond interchange at Interstate 435 and Front Street in the June 2006 edition of *Civil Engineering Magazine: The Magazine of the American Society of Civil Engineers*.

Fire Destroys Home: Johnny Appleberry, stadium crew member, and Martha Eddings, part-time Scout employee, lost everything in a June 11 house fire caused by an electrical short. John and Martha have four children, two boys and two girls ages seven through twelve.

The family welcomes donations of food, dishes, bath essentials (towels, wash clothes), cleaning supplies, beauty aids and first-aid supplies.

Donation boxes are located in the district office breakroom. A donation can is also located at the security desk for those wishing to make monetary or gift card donations. Please contact Amy Gagne 816-622-6302 or Amy.Gagne@modot.mo.gov with questions.

The Mail Bag



The following e-mail was received July 3 from Mr. Anthony of Kansas City:

Good Morning! Thanks for all you do to mow and clean up around I-70, Bruce R. Watkins Drive, etc. Appreciate it! Have a safe 4th!

Salary Increase: the MHTC approved the department's fiscal year 2007 budget in June, which includes a 4 percent cost of living salary increase for the following department employees: salaried, permanent part-time, co-op, seasonal, temporary part-time, retirees, summer/intern employees, and other wage employees. The increase will appear in July's last paycheck.

Direct Deposit Reimbursements: Effective June 16, all employee expense payments are directly deposited into the same bank accounts employees have established for electronic payroll deposits. Those employees without direct deposit will continue to receive paper checks. For now, employees should monitor their own bank accounts if expecting a payment. The Office of Administration will eventually establish a website where employees can track payments. For more information, contact Judy Magruder at 816-622-6309 or judith.magruder@modot.mo.gov.

Vehicle mileage reimbursements: Starting July 1, if you use your personal vehicle for business travel because you choose to, you'll be reimbursed 23 cents per mile, the cost for MoDOT to operate its fleet vehicles, instead of the state mileage allowance of 41.5 cents per mile (the state mileage allowance increased from 37.5 cents because of rate changes based on the Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rate). If you have to use your personal vehicle for business travel because a pool car is not available or your supervisor requests you use your personal vehicle, you will be reimbursed 41.5 cents per mile. You will not be reimbursed if you choose to use your personal vehicle for business travel rather than car pool with other employees traveling to the same location. Reimbursement for personal car mileage must be pre-approved by your supervisor. The personal vehicle reimbursement rate will be evaluated annually and adjusted as necessary to keep pace with the cost of operating our fleet vehicles. If you have questions, contact Debbie Kraus at 573-526-1376 or your district Support Services Manager.

Smoking Policy: smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco is no longer allowed in any MoDOT facility, including large, open-space work areas of department garages and maintenance facilities. Smoking and the use of smokeless tobacco is only allowed in outside designated smoking areas.

D4 to Pilot Innovations PORTAL Program

I have some exciting news. Our district has been chosen to participate in a pilot program that I think you're going to like. I know how ingenious you all are at getting the most done at the least cost. This pilot program will hopefully get you the recognition you deserve and at the same time let everyone else take advantage of how you've improved the way you work.



Beth Wright
District Engineer

During the months of June, July and August, we will be piloting the Innovations PORTAL program. You'll be given the opportunity to answer six questions to capture the basics about your best practice. If your best practice is chosen to be shared statewide, you'll attend a special recognition event in September hosted by Pete Rahn.

Remember, we're looking for best practices that you've already put to work in your area. I encourage you to work in teams to put together your submission. Innovations PORTAL can be a great way to share the fantastic things we're doing in our district and formally thank you for making a difference. I'm anxious to see just how many best practices we have at work in our district.

Please complete the Innovations PORTAL program form located on the intranet at: http://wwwi.intranet/d4/information_and_reports.htm. A copy of the form may also be obtained by contacting Amy Gagne at 816-622-6302 or Amy.Gagne@modot.mo.gov.



Former Senior Crew Worker Jerry "Pops" Johnson celebrates 24 years of service with family and friends at his June 23 retirement luncheon in Liberty. Jerry looks forward to spending more time at his cabin with his grandchildren.

Kirsten Münck

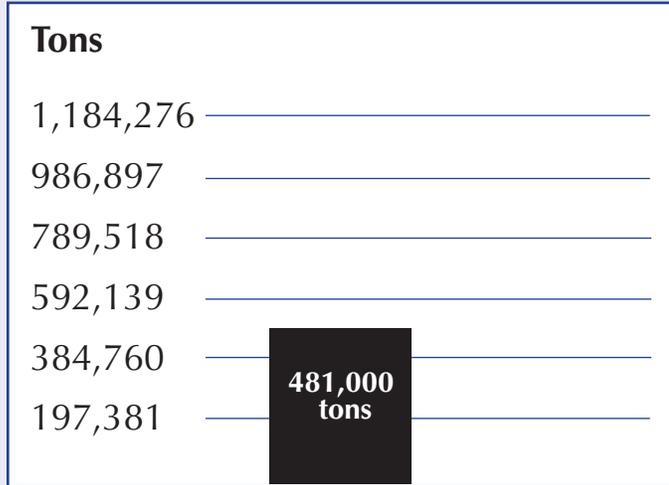
Smooth Roads Initiative

490 centerline miles of the Kansas City Area's busiest roadways in good condition by December 2006

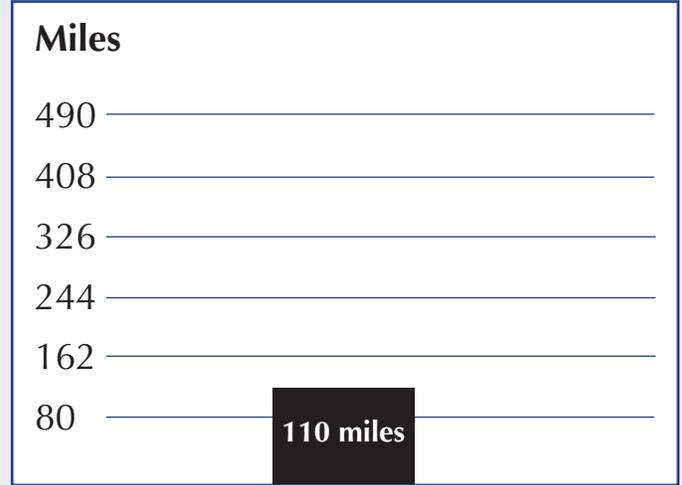
Progress to Date



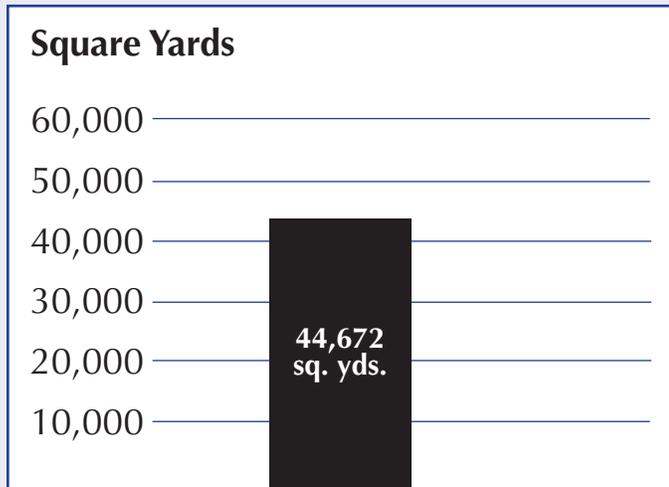
Smoother, Safer, Sooner
Amendment 3



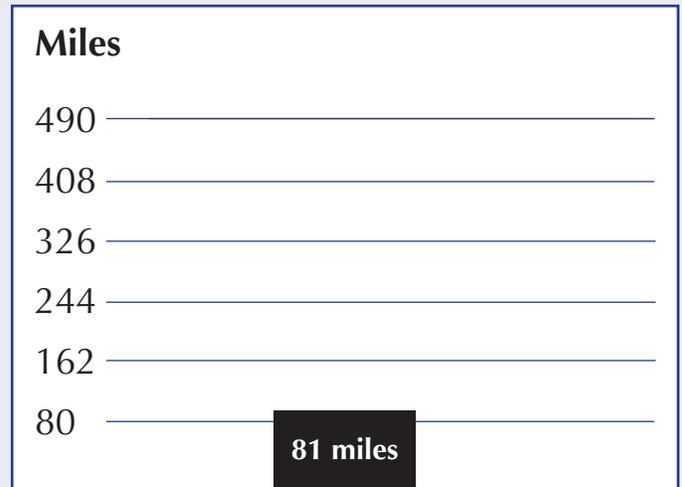
Tons of asphalt



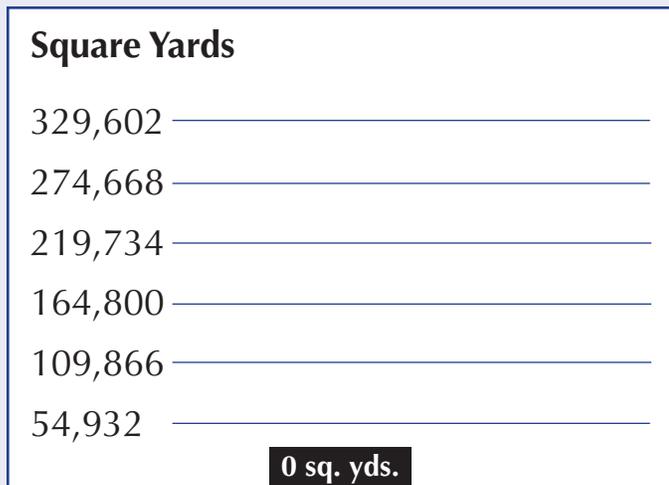
Striping



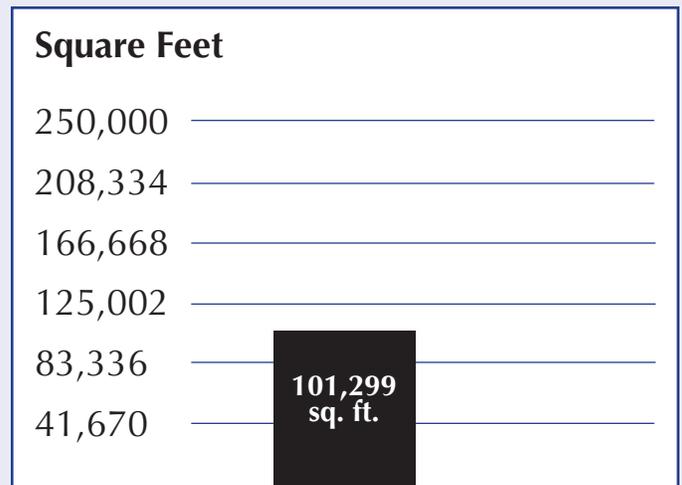
Pavement repair



Delineators



Ultrathin-bonded wearing surface



Signs

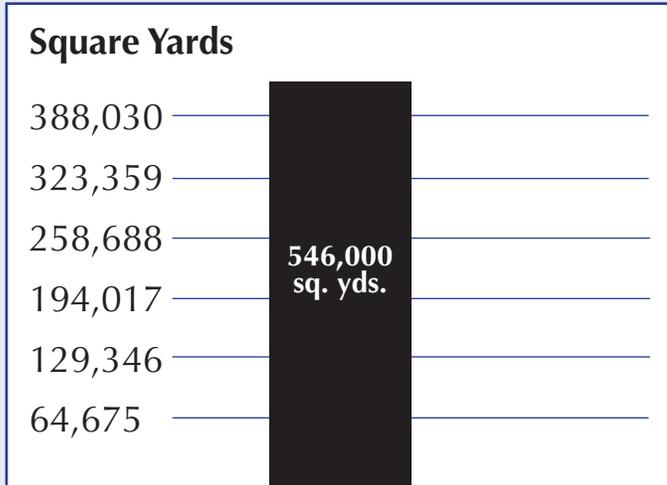
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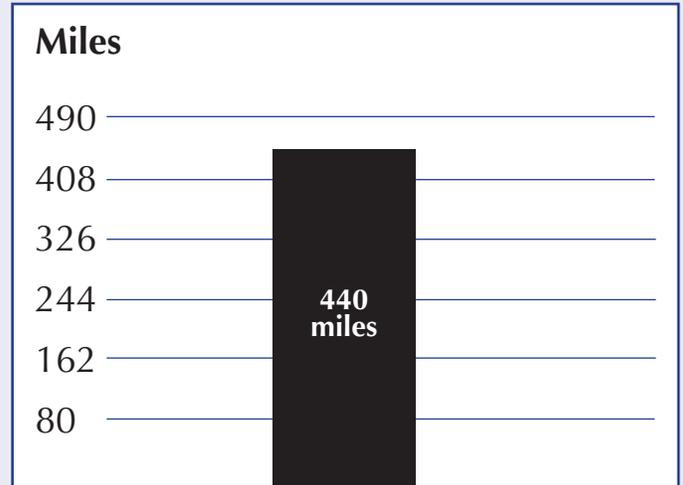
Progress to Date



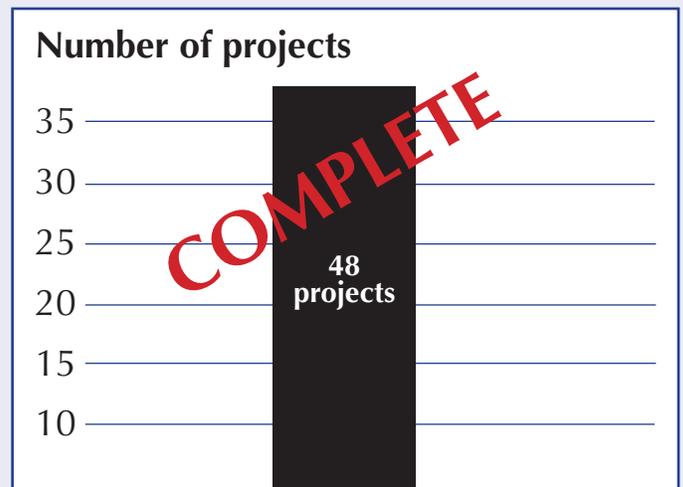
Smoother, Safer, Sooner
Amendment 3



Diamond grinding



Clear zones cleared



Projects designed