State of Missouri
2008 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity
Executive Summary

Team Name:

I-64 Closure Command team

Nominator:

Ed Hassinger, District Engineer

Nominating Department:

Missouri Department of Transportation
St. Louis County
Missouri State Highway Patrol
Metro and Gateway Constructors

Category:

Customer Service

Executive Summary:

MoDOT's reconstruction of Interstate 64 in St. Louis City and county included closing five miles of the interstate beginning January 2, 2008, for one year. This closure would displace 170,000 vehicles per day to the region's other roads.

The I-64 Closure Command Team was created to provide a creative, efficient way to handle the crisis of closing five miles of Interstate 64 in St. Louis for one year. By involving partners from other state and local agencies, the team could more efficiently work together to manage the traffic in St. Louis. The closure of this roadway had the potential to profoundly impact the daily lives of thousands of Missouri motorists in a negative way. The single driving focus of the team was towards our customers and to do everything possible to minimize the impact of the project. The success of this unprecedented collective and cooperative effort in Missouri is undeniable and other states are now using the lessons learned from the team's experience in similar projects.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Missouri Department of Transportation

1. **Project or team name.**

I-64 Closure Command Team

2. **List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or community organization.**

Linda Wilson	Project Manager, St. Louis Area	Missouri Department of Transportation
Lesley Hoffarth	Project Manager, St. Louis Area	Missouri Department of Transportation
Larry Grither	District Traffic Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Jean Olalekan	Senior Traffic Technician	Missouri Department of Transportation
Captain Ron Johnson	Captain of Troop C	Missouri Highway Patrol
Dan Galvin	I-64 Public Relations Director	Gateway Constructors
Garry Earls	Chief Operating Officer	St. Louis County
Tim Emeree	Mayor's Office	St. Louis City
Diane Williams	Community Relations	Metro
Tom Blair	Assistant District Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Denis Bigley	District Maintenance Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Teresa Krennin	District Transportation Management Center Manager	Missouri Department of Transportation
Becky Allmeroth	Assistant District Traffic Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Karen Yeomans	Area Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Rachel Wilhelm	District Design Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Dee Venker	Area Engineer	Missouri Department of Transportation
Owen Hasson	Maintenance Superintendent	Missouri Department of Transportation
Bruce Pettus	District Incident Response Coordinator	Missouri Department of Transportation

3. **Nomination category.**
   (Check *only one*)

   ☐ INNOVATION   ☒ CUSTOMER SERVICE

   ☐ PROCESS IMPROVEMENT   ☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

   ☐ EFFICIENCY

4. **Describe why you selected this nomination category.**

The I-64 Closure Command Team was created to provide a creative, efficient way to handle the crisis of closing five miles of Interstate 64 in St. Louis for one year. By involving partners from other state and local agencies, the team could more efficiently work together to manage the traffic in St. Louis. The closure of this roadway had the potential to profoundly impact the daily lives of thousands of Missouri motorists in a negative way. The single driving focus of the team was towards our customers and to do everything possible to minimize the impact of the project. The success of this unprecedented collective and cooperative effort in Missouri is undeniable and other states are now using the lessons learned from the team's experience in similar projects.

II. BACKGROUND

1. **When did the team begin?**

July 2007

2. **When did the team implement this project?**

January 2008 with the closure of Interstate 64 on January 2, 2008

3. **How long has the project been implemented?**

☐ 0 - 3 Months   ☐ 4 – 6 Months   ☐ 7 - 9 Months

☒ 10 – 12 Months   ☐ 12 or more   ☐ On-going Project

III. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENT

1. **What did the team accomplish?** (*Use specific data and examples to identify accomplishments and whom benefited: i.e. agency, division, department, citizens, individuals, etc. Information must be included for nomination to be considered for GAQP.*)

MoDOT's reconstruction of Interstate 64 in St. Louis City and county included closing five miles of the interstate beginning January 2, 2008, for one year. This closure would displace 170,000 vehicles per day to the region's other roads. MoDOT treated this as a planned incident and followed National Incident Management System (NIMS) protocol. In advance of the closure, the agency worked together with St. Louis County and Gateway Constructors to make system improvements to all the region's roads to help traffic move better. This preparatory process built relationships amongst the agencies as the closure date drew near. The New I-64 Closure Command Team was organized to ensure MoDOT and its partners were knowledgeable of the condition and operations of the region's transportation system, actively managing travel reliability and communicating conditions to the public. The team's success would be measured by whether travel times were no more than 50 percent greater than pre-closure conditions. Surveys, mobility studies and tests have shown that freeway travel times in this region are very similar to the previous year, a strong verification of the team's success.

The closure of Interstate 64 happened on January 2, 2008. The region's traffic continued to flow, better in some areas than before the closure. Incremental changes in signal timing on key arterials fine-tuned the trouble spots. Problems were identified, evaluated and solved – often within hours of first notice. Motorists used the traffic information resources that had been developed by the team, to find their recommended alternate routes. Businesses offered flexible schedules to their employees and location or delivery options for their customers.

To achieve the purpose of the team, the group was divided into sub-teams focused on areas including, interstates, arterials, law enforcement, maintenance, liaison with local cities, public information, St. Louis County, St. Louis City and Metro. Members worked from a central location to facilitate teamwork and efficient problem solving. The sub-teams used staff in the field and staff monitoring sensors and computers to gather the information real-time during each rush period. The information was quickly collected and reported at 10 a.m. and 8 p.m., following the morning and evening rush. It was then shared publicly in a news conference at 11 a.m. and 9 p.m. to ensure timeliness.

Computer sensors were installed to collect data and teams were organized to drive the routes to verify the travel time information. A team of traffic engineers from MoDOT, Gateway Constructors, St. Louis County and St. Louis City developed a system to travel and monitor the major routes, watch for bottlenecks and make improvements. Items were debriefed and brainstormed for solutions to be implemented before the next rush period.

The I-64 Traffic Response Team was formed with MoDOT and St. Louis County to patrol the non-interstates to perform quick clearance of incidents and crashes. MoDOT also utilized its existing interstate Motorist Assist with the Patrol and local law enforcement.

Messages were sent to the public through the media to make changes based on what was seen and the public responded. In some of the most impacted areas, commute times are no more than 25% longer than before the closure. The interstates and arterial roadways have predictable travel times in normal conditions. A survey of motorists and stakeholders indicated that 90% felt they were well informed about the closure.

2. **Which of the following describes the benefits of the accomplishment?** (Check all that apply and provide an explanation)

☐ cost reduction ☐ time savings

☒ improved process ☐ other: describe

The success of the Command Team has provided MoDOT, other state DOT's, and local governmental agencies, a new blueprint for use in similar situations and projects. Such a large cooperative effort had never before been utilized to this extent in Missouri. The group's flexibility and ability to take immediate corrective actions pertaining to traffic congestion played a significant role in the success thus far.

III. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENT (continued)

3. **Explain how the accomplishments of the team are beyond regular duties and responsibilities** (150 words or less).

All of these state and local agencies don't normally work together as one team and certainly had never worked together in one facilitated location before. To understand the uniqueness, you have to compare it to normal.

The normal process for getting traffic information takes weeks. The proactive monitoring of computers and having people run the routes gave us instant information. Before this time, sensors were not in place to provide the information. The new system allowed us to get the information real time. The normal process for signal complaints would have involved issuing a report and having an engineer set up a time to go evaluate the situation and make a decision later. We proactively monitored the key roads and worked as a team to address issues and solve problems same day by working together in the same command center.

IV. MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION

1. **Explain how the team measured and evaluated this project** (Describe in detail the process and results).

The team used the immediate measure of travel times for each rush hour as an instant evaluation of how the system was handling the change in traffic. Twice daily briefings for each rush period allowed all team members to share the results of that rush hour and proactively discuss what changes could be made to help the next rush hour. After the first month, briefings have been reduced but still continue twice a month. Travel times are monitored and compared to pre-closure travel times with a goal of not having a 25 percent increase in travel times.

In the month of January, MoDOT's online survey was promoted through the media and more than 1,700 people and 101 businesses participated. As noted below, customer satisfaction was significant during this period.

SATISFACTION DATA
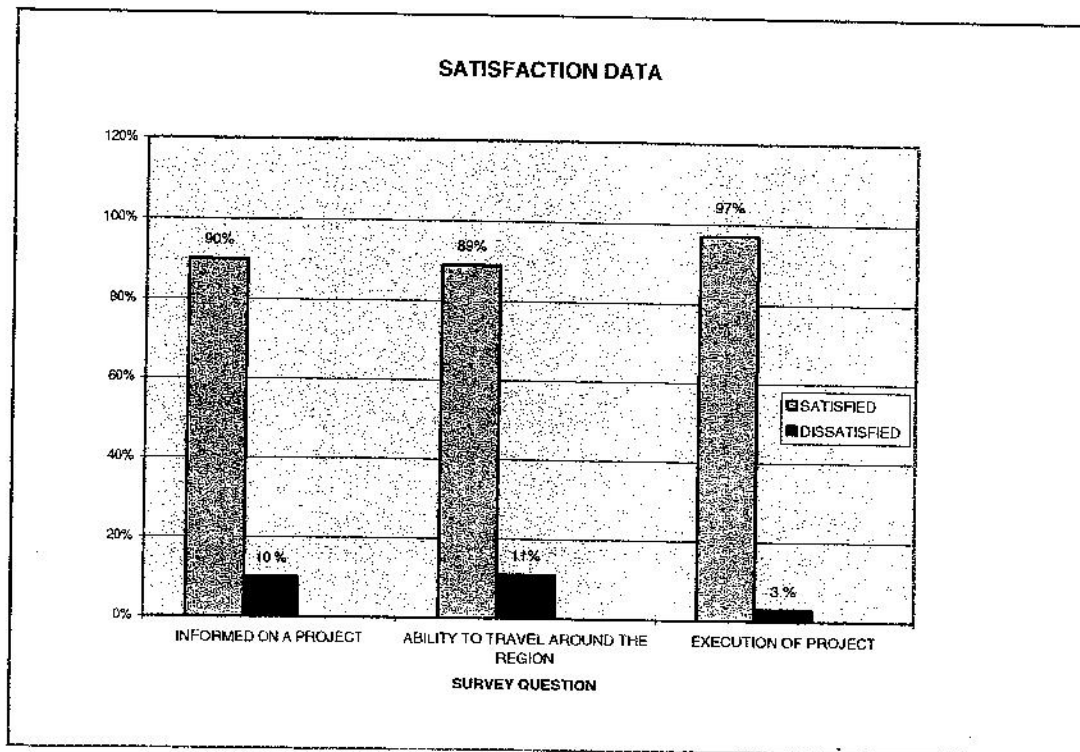
MoDOT's Economic and Regional Mobility Quarterly Report (January – February 2008) concluded 170,000 vehicles that used I-64 between Ballas Road and I-170 before closure have moved to alternate routes with no major impact to travel times for commuters.

Current trends conclude travelers have taken alternate routes, altered their travel schedules, and utilized alternate modes. Transit has experienced a 9 percent jump in ridership. Ridefinders (carpooling organization) has experienced a 32 percent increase in membership.
MoDOT utilized pre-closure traffic volumes and travel times as a benchmark.

2. **Are the benefits derived from this project:** (Check only one.)

☒ Recurring   ☐ One-time

3. **Please explain in 300 to 500 words.**

So many of the traffic management items developed and implemented for the I-64 Closure will continue to benefit the public for the long term. Dispersing the traffic to alternate routes without major impacts involved considerable planning and implementation. Through the use of strategies such as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies; re-striping interstates, ramps, and arterial routes to increase capacity; implementing signal timing plans to increase the green band on arterial routes, MoDOT was able to increase the capacity on the alternate routes without expanding the system. The I-64 Traffic Response team helps to clear vehicles from the roadway quickly to decrease the impacts to traffic. Public outreach efforts including public meetings, public appearances, weekly appearances on local media, and web-chats helped inform the public about the project and available alternatives. The public was prepared for the closure and developed alternate plans for their daily commute. Working closely with other agencies helped to coordinate mitigation efforts. Providing a unified message to the public during the closure kept the public informed as much as possible.

All of these actions showed state government working with local government as a team to help and serve the public. We were one unified team. The long-term benefit is the development of close partnerships, relationships and true team spirit with all these agencies. These relationships will carry over into future projects

for years to come. The public in St. Louis has seen that government can work together for the common good of the people.

This team will continue to work together and is already preparing for the next closure phase of the I-64 project at the end of 2008. All of the efficiencies this team has learned from the January 2008 closure will be applied to the managing of the January 2009 closure.

V. RECOGNITION/AWARDS

1. **Has this project ever been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity? If yes, when?**

No
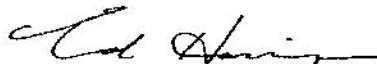
2. **If yes, for which category was it nominated?**

3. **Has this project received any other awards or recognition in the past? If yes, describe.**

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials President's Quality Award for Team Excellence, to be received in October 2008

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

NOMINATING DEPARTMENT

Missouri Department of Transportation, St. Louis Area, District 6

Name	Signature	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address
Ed Hassinger		314-340-4200	Ed.Hassinger@modot.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT

Missouri Department of Transportation, Organizational Results Unit

Name	Signature	Telephone Number	E-Mail Address
Gloria Andrews		(573) 526-3637	Gloria.Andrews@modot.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S NAME	DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR'S SIGNATURE*
Pete Rahn	

**Nomination must be signed ONLY by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration. Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned.**