US-131 S-Curve
US-131 S-Curve

• Context
  – Downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan
  – 1.1 Miles Mainly Structure
  – Over 100,000 ADT
  – Structures Condition issues
  – Downtown was planning for redevelopment
  – $127.3 Million Construction Cost

• Reconstructed in 2000
US-131 S-Curve

- Main CSS Elements
  - Flexibility
  - Stakeholder Engagement
  - Safety
  - Environmental Protection
  - Cultural/Historical Outreach
Location Map
CSS Approach

• What makes this a CSS project as opposed to the traditional format?
  – Traditional Methods would have yielded a State Trunkline project.
  – CSS yielded a community project.
Transportation Need

• S-Curve was sinking
  – Gypsum Deposits Dissolving
  – Large Settlement of Structure
  – Functional Deficiencies
    • Ramps
    • Narrow Shoulders
    • Alignment
    • Congestion
  – Only North/South Freeway
Compatibility with Natural Environment

- River Crossing with restricted access
- Likely Archaeological Sites under bridge
- Restricted timeline to coordinate.
Compatibility with Human Environment

- Area of Significance to Native Americans
- Maintaining access to business
- Minimizing construction schedule
- GVSC adjacent to Freeway
- Museum Storage Building
- City Planners Seeking to revitalize the neighborhood
Initial Project Vision

- Repair or Replace the structure over the Grand River.
CSS Project Vision

• Provide a safe transportation facility that meet future needs and enhances the downtown community
Stakeholder Involvement

ZIGGY

HELLO, OPERATOR... I'D LIKE TO PLACE A CALL TO SOMEONE WHO CARES.

© 1995, Ziggy and Friends, Inc./Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
Stakeholder Involvement

• Stakeholder Identification
  – Known Lists, Public Information Meetings, City and Business, Neighborhood groups, MPO
  – Mass Transit Coordination

• Garnering & Incorporating their Inputs
  – Multiple Meetings with feedback requirements
  – Built Partnerships
Stakeholder Involvement

• Consensus building approaches
  – Traffic Planning Sessions
  – Advisory Council

• Unique Approaches – Extensive Communication Network
  – Web Site Information
  – TV Panel
  – Active Campaign
  – Bill Board
Stakeholder Involvement

- Lessons worth Sharing
  - High Level Commitments
  - Interest Based Discussions
  - Resource Commitment
Stakeholder Involvement

• Lessons worth Sharing
  – MDOT/Community Common Focus
  – Built Trust/Use of Visualization
Transportation Success

• How was the project successful in meeting transportation needs?
  – Roadway alignment improved to from 45 to 50 mph design.
  – Ramps reconfigured to provide better traffic flow to downtown area.
  – Weave merge lanes added for better ingress and egress from ramps
Transportation Success

- Full Shoulders
- Enhanced the local bus terminal
- Provided anti-icing system for better winter maintenance
- Addition of ITS
Facility as a Community Asset

- Only North/South freeway into and through the City.
- It is the main transportation corridor from Indiana to Central and Northern Michigan.
- Provides freeway access to the downtown business district, DeVos Arena, Grand Valley State College.
Accomplishments

- Minimal Project Opposition.
- Created partnerships
- Improved transportation function and facilitated community improvements
- Preserved river environment and recovered historic artifacts
- Road Closure a non-event
Accomplishments

• Concept to Letting in 18 Months.
  Construction in 12 Months

• Created a very pleasing amenity to community

• Best Practice to follow
CSS Bottomline

How were our actions different?

– Continuous/Early Communication
– High Level Commitment
– Commitment to shared problem solving
CSS Bottomline

How was our attitude different?

– Open to input
– Desire to build Trust
– Committed but not forceful
CSS Bottomline

• How was our decisionmaking different?
  – Considered Stakeholder Input
  – Made after input not before
  – Included non-traditional highway items
  – Cross Functional Instead of Chimney
CSS Bottomline

- How did our customers respond as partners?
  - Did there buy-in from all?
    - Started Rough but Built Trust
    - Created Lasting partnerships
    - Helped MDOT expedite project aspects
    - Even media came around
CSS Bottomline

Many of us are more capable than some of us... but none of us is as capable as all of us!!
Contact Information

Dennis Kent
Grand Region Planner
(616) 451-3091
kentd@michigan.gov

Lynn Lynwood
CSS Specialist
(517) 373-0026
lynwoodl@michigan.gov