An issue on management of road departments

“Do not disturb”

One county’s answer to utility cuts on paved roads

... By Lisa Harris ..................

A year ago, Finney County set out to revise their utility cuts policy. One of their commissioners wanted to charge contractors a fee for pavement cuts, which prompted the initial research. What they eventually came up with was a policy to ban utility cuts on paved county roads altogether—and require boring under the pavement instead.

“The commissioner’s request gave us the opportunity to examine what we really wanted to take place in the right-of-way, said Ellermann. And what they wanted was undisturbed pavement—and a sufficiently detailed permit process.

Components of the new policy

Permit. The new policy requires that anyone wanting to work in the right-of-way to acquire a permit. The permit is usually acquired by a contractor, but must be signed by a representative of the utility company or private property owner ordering the work.

The county does not charge for the permit. “We decided to make the permit free so we would have a better chance of people obtaining and honoring a permit. Then we’d have a little bit of control over the project,” said John Ellermann, Finney County public works director.

Requirement to bore. The permit specifies that underground installations must be a minimum of 72 inches below crown or no less than 36 inches below ditch grade. The permit also includes an expected timeframe for completion of the work, a requirement to document that One-Call has been contacted prior to the dig, a liability clause, and other requirements to ensure quality work and the safety of the workers and the traveling public.

The permit provides more guidance about the process of working in the right-of-way than was available previously, and should result in less confusion.

Fines. If the project is not completed properly, fines will be assessed if the county “has to go in and fix any of their problems,” said Ellermann. For example, fines will be assessed for filling a hole later than the specified timeframe or for poor work that causes a collapsed trench (and any consequent sunken pavement).

continued on page 2 ➤
Manager’s retreat covers CIP and more

Municipalities have the best opportunity to provide good quality and efficient service to their citizens when their departments are coordinated. Departments work better together when their employees know each other and understand what each department does. Administrators at the City of Hutchinson (Kan.) understand this, and foster networking across departments at their annual Manager's Retreat.

The retreat is a full day long at a location away from city hall. It brings together all supervisor-level city employees to meet face-to-face (about 70 of them), plus the city manager and elected officials.

The retreat has something for everyone. It provides a good orientation to new staff, a refresher for old-timers, and a chance for types of conversation not typical on the job.

The retreat starts with an ice-breaker; in 2003, the group was asked “If you were to put a bumper sticker on your car, what would it say?”—and each person said their answer aloud. “You get a better sense of your colleagues as people, that way,” said Hal Munger, Hutchinson city engineer. Munger has attended many retreats in

AGENDA—Hutchinson's Manager's Annual Retreat 2003
Thursday, October 30, 2003

8:00 – 8:45 a.m.  Sign-in, continental breakfast, housekeeping, ice-breaker, door prizes
8:45 – 9:45     Group activity
9:45 – 10:00    New hires/promotions
10:00 – 10:30   Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) review
10:30 – 10:45   Break
10:45 – 12:30 p.m. Professional development speaker Bill Cordes
12:30 -1:00    Lunch
1:00 - 3:00     Bill Cordes, continued
3:00 - 3:15    Break, door prizes
3:15 – 3:25    Strategic Plan calendar and quarterly report
3:25 – 3:40    2005 Budget concerns
3:40 - 4:00    Extra Mile/Suggestion recipients
                Announcements, closing remarks, adjourn
his 20 years with the public works department.

**Basic retreat structure**
Each retreat is different, but each is designed to combine a mix of reports, brainstorming, group activities and some fun. (See box for the 2003 agenda). Munger said the retreat is a must-attend event, and is well worth the time.

**Benefits to the departments**
The major benefit for the public works department has been to build working relationships with other departments, Munger said. “It’s always good when you get the police lieutenants talking with the street supervisors,” he said. Munger even signed up for the Hutchinson Police Academy—a community information program on how the police department operates—as a result of information shared at a retreat.

Another benefit is just getting out of the office and doing something different. In 2003 the retreat featured professional development speaker Bill Cordes. Cordes discussed what he calls the YOGOWYPI Factor (“you only get out what you put in”) in how a person identifies his/her focus, obstacles and life-path.

A good part of the retreat is plain old city business—introducing new employees, discussing the Capital Improvements Plan process, discussing any budget concerns, and more. “Discussing these issues with other departments helps you understand your part in the big picture,” Munger said.

Hutchinson’s retreat was started by Joe Palacioz, who recently retired as city manager. The new manager, John Deardoff, will continue the tradition.

**For more information**
Munger would be happy to answer any questions you have about Hutchinson’s manager’s retreat. Call Hal at (620) 694-2644. ■

---

**Bosses’ top 10 pet peeves**

Getting the job done is a two-way street. Everyone has pet peeves—things that really bother them. If you want to stay on your boss’s good side, don’t do things that are irritants. Here’s what makes most managers’ blood boil.

**Bad attitude.** This is a top peeve; bosses notice when employees take on a passive/aggressive attitude or lack courtesy when interacting with others.

**Whining.** Don’t be a complainer. There’s a difference between constructive criticism and being a whiner. Whiners often focus on the negative side of events or tasks.

**Delegating up.** If you’ve been given responsibility for decisions or projects, take it to heart. Bosses delegate for a reason. If a decision seems tough, don’t send it back to your boss for him or her to make. Most bosses believe that even if you make a bad decision, you still learn and grow.

**Withholding information.** If you have bad news to deliver to your boss, don’t withhold it. They often need this information to manage effectively. Don’t be afraid of a “kill the messenger” reaction. Most bosses will be grateful for the information.

**It’s not my job.** Regardless of efforts to build teams in the workplace, there are still plenty of employees who are reluctant to pitch in. Bosses always remember who does and doesn’t help out.

**Lack of dependability.** Don’t be the type of employee who doesn’t come in on time or doesn’t call in when sick. Communicate with your boss.

**Myopia.** Every company has a big picture under which it operates. You don’t exist alone. Keep in mind what the department does and how you are contributing to the overall goals.

**Overreacting.** The workplace is in constant flux. Be flexible and don’t overreact to every change.

**Bickering.** Few things grate on bosses’ nerves more than having to baby-sit employees who bicker and fight. Try to solve problems between yourself and co-workers on your own.

**Unrealistic expectations.** Employees who think that things will always be the same in the workplace or that the budget won’t affect the workplace environment are unrealistic and annoying. Change is inevitable.


---

**Buyer beware!**

Did you know that not all signs and work zone apparel available for sale conform with the current version of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD)? One of our Kansas LTAP trainers, Johnny Dahl, has seen items in recent catalogs that do not meet current standards.

Don’t get caught by this. Take a few minutes to compare the item you want to order with how it is pictured in the latest KDOT-adopted MUTCD, to be sure it meets the national standards. Every road department in Kansas should have a copy of the MUTCD; if you don’t, call us at (785) 864-2590. ■
Tips for employers to reduce workers compensation liability

Communication with employees during all phases of the employment relationship is the key to reducing liability.

The Kansas Workers Compensation Act requires employers to educate and inform employees of their rights to workers compensation benefits as well as the reporting requirements under the Act. The Workers Compensation Notice, also known as K-WC 40, must be posted in a conspicuous place where all workers can see their rights and responsibilities. This Notice is free and can be obtained from the Kansas Division of Workers Compensation by calling (785) 296-3441.

Inform new workers of their rights—before they start working. Insurance statistics demonstrate that employers who openly communicate about workers compensation benefits and rights actually have a lower claims experience than those who do not. One of the best ways to inform workers of workers compensation benefits and reporting requirements is during the orientation process. Provide the K-WC 40 and Information for Injured Employees (K-WC 27) in every orientation packet and have each worker sign a statement that they received, read, and understood the Notice and the 10-day reporting requirement after an injury.

Provide immediate medical attention, preferably with choices. When someone is hurt on the job, it is very important to provide immediate quality medical care. In fact, if possible, give the employee a choice of three physicians; this gives the employee input from the very beginning as to their course of medical treatment.

Cost is certainly a factor in choosing a medical provider, but quality is most important. You want a doctor who will spend adequate time, show concern for the employee's well being, and conduct a thorough examination. Nothing will cause an employee to hire an attorney faster than uncaring, cursory medical treatment.

Injured workers like to be reassured that they are receiving good quality medical care. If they have confidence in the medical provider, they will most likely have a positive feeling about their recovery and their prospects for returning to work.

Don't underestimate the power of a get well card. The cost of a first class stamp to communicate your concern will go a long way to build good will with the injured employee and help reduce liability. Not only should management send a get well card, but the co-workers and supervisors should also send one. This concept goes back to the basic tenet of common courtesy. If we treat others as we would want to be treated in the same situation, the lines of communication stay open, and the employer/employee relationship stays intact.

Employers who openly communicate about workers compensation benefits and rights actually have a lower claims experience than those who do not.

Keep in close contact with the employee on a weekly basis. A staff member should be designated to have weekly contact with the injured worker. Don't leave this job for the human resources department. This contact could be in person or by telephone. The more contact the employer has with the employee, the less likely litigation will result on the claim.

Tell the employee you are holding his/her job. One of the biggest factors in litigation is uncertainty. Communication can alleviate uncertainty—and reduce the chance of litigation. Send a letter telling the employee you are holding his/her job.

Many employers do not have enough workers and cannot afford to be without help. Rather than permanently filling the injured worker's position, try to hire someone on a temporary basis. Temporary workers provide a stop gap measure so that the injured worker's job can be held for him or her once released from medical treatment.

Temp arrangements keep things simple for your personnel department. Once the temporary service worker is laid off, the temporary agency is liable for any unemployment benefits, not your department. Likewise, if the temporary worker is injured while working on your premises, the temporary agency is liable for workers compensation benefits. So, a temporary service worker is a win/win situation for all sides. By preserving the employer/
employee relationship and holding the injured worker's job, the employer will greatly reduce potential liability.

**Check to make sure claims are being paid on time.** Communicate with your insurance carrier or self-insured program to get them on the ball to make timely payments. Insurance adjusters are very busy people, but most of them do a good job. However, occasionally things fall through the cracks.

There is nothing more frustrating to an injured worker than having to deal with a claims adjuster's voice mail and never being able to talk to a human being. Since you, as the employer, have paid the premium, you have the right to demand good service on the claim. Make certain that you convey your desire to have the medical bills and temporary total payments paid in a prompt and timely manner. Bills that are not paid result in collection suits against injured workers, which in turn result in the worker hiring a lawyer.

**Bring the employee back as soon as feasible.** Oftentimes workers have certain restrictions while undergoing medical care and treatment. If you have light duty work available, immediately offer such work to the worker—and communicate this offer in writing.

Return an injured worker to work as soon as possible and make accommodations. One of the biggest factors in litigation is the fact that when workers return to work, they feel their restrictions are not accommodated. These problems can be avoided by sitting down with the employee, one on one, and coming up with a return-to-work plan. This way the injured worker has input into the return-to-work plan, the job, and the job duties.

Employers who intentionally violate doctor's restrictions are virtually guaranteeing themselves that a work-related injury will turn into full blown litigation.

**Prepare the injured worker's co-workers for his/her return.** When an injured worker returns to work, but cannot perform all his/her prior work tasks, a tense situation can arise between the injured worker and co-workers. The employer has the obligation to diffuse this kind of tension and prevent it from escalating. The best prevention is educating co-workers on the employer's return-to-work policy and the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act. It is very important for the employer to notify co-workers that teasing and harassment of an injured worker will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action—up to, and including, termination.

**Don't put your head in the sand.** Do not ignore workers compensation problems—they will not just go away. Ignoring problems will only increase the likelihood that the claim blows up, gets out of control, and will be litigated. Communication and common courtesy will build up more goodwill than ignoring the situation.

**Bottom line:** If every employer would treat every injured worker as a personal relative, litigation, attorney fees, and payouts for workers compensation claims would dramatically go down. Workers compensation claims involve human relationships. An employer enhances that relationship and reduces potential liability by openly communicating with workers and practicing common courtesy.

Adapted with permission from *Communication with employees during all phases of the employment relationship is the key to reducing liability*, Kansas Department of Human Resources Division of Workers Compensation, K-WC 304 (Rev. 9-98).
Getting the ball rolling

How Ellis County used PVC pipe and a golf ball to build awareness of public works skills.

... by Laura Snyder ..............

In our last issue, we mentioned we’d tell you more about a team-building exercise Ellis County included in their one-day public works training refresher. Donnetta Pfeifer, public works administrative assistant, designed the activity after surfing the Internet, looking for an activity with hands-on involvement.

The “Pipeline”
Four teams with nine or ten workers each worked as a group to solve the problem Pfeifer posed, called the “Pipeline.” Each team member was given a short “chute,” which was a piece of PVC pipe about a foot long, cut in half lengthwise. Each team also received one “rolling object”—in this case, a golf ball.

Orange cones and tape marked a long, curvy path about 3 or 4 feet wide. Team members lined up side by side at the beginning of the path with the goal of getting the ball into a can at the other end. Each team member held his chute and shifted the ball from his chute to another along the line. However, the path was longer than the line of people, so after a team member passed the ball into another’s chute, he had to run to the other end of the line with his empty chute to keep the ball moving steadily towards the can. Each person ended up passing the ball through his chute at least three times. While passing the ball, team members could not drop the ball, let it touch the ground, stop at any time, or roll backwards. They could not move their feet unless they were running to the other end of the line to continue the path, and they couldn’t touch any other team member. If any of these rules were broken, the team had to start over.

The team was expected to take the initiative to name a leader. Pfeifer did not give a time limit, but the teams were timed to see how quickly they could accomplish the task.

“It made them think about how planning is essential in our work,” says Pfeifer. “And they had to communicate among themselves.”

The teams were assessed by how well they used planning, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, accountability and responsibility, and quality versus quantity—all strategies they use daily in their jobs.

Reaction from staff
The exercise turned out unexpectedly well, says Pfeifer. “Supervisors warned me that it was not going to work because no one in the department had ever done this before. They didn’t want me to be disappointed when no one participated,” she says. “Before it was over, there was laughter and others were praising and patting each other on the shoulder for a job well done. It was a lot of fun,” says Pfeifer.

Curt Hoffman, Ellis County Road and Bridge Supervisor, was not on a team, but helped Pfeifer oversee the activity. Hoffman said he was skeptical of the idea at first. “But once we started, I was surprised that everyone got involved,” he says. “I think everybody had a good time doing it.”

Pfeifer plans to use the exercise again in the future, maybe using balls with different weights to make the activity more challenging.

For more information, contact Donnetta Pfeifer at 785-628-9455.

How much salt?

... by Lisa Harris ..............

Kansas LTAP was asked recently if we knew of a method for calculating the amount of road salt a community would need to purchase. We posed this question to Dick Hanneman, president of the Salt Institute. Dick said there is no hard-and-fast method.

“Salt usage depends on too many variables to permit a formula,” he said. “The best starting point is the last five years’ usage, adjusted for increased roads, improved spreading equipment or improved application techniques.” Hanneman also noted that improved storage would also be a factor, if storage was previously uncovered.
Riley County’s salt storage shed is rock solid

Ten years ago, Riley County set out to build a salt storage shed that would be spacious, convenient, and built to last. Looks like they succeeded!

Key features
— The shed is constructed of pre-stressed concrete panels with stainless steel tension cables and fasteners to prohibit rust. The concrete floor is 12 ft. thick.
— The facility is 60 ft. square and can hold over 200 tons of salt. The eave height is 25 ft., which allows crews to fully extend a loader and reach the top of the pile.
— The horizontal bi-fold door works airplane hangar style; it folds out and up, to stay clear of equipment adding or removing salt.
— The conveyor for placing salt in the shed is stainless steel.
— There is a large concrete pad in front of the shed, with controlled drainage. This allows the county to accept salt deliveries 24 hours a day.
— The pad holds up to five semi-loads.
— Truck drivers leave their delivery tickets in a special mailbox at the site.

How’s it working?
“It works just great,” said Rod Meredith, assistant director of public works. “It’s been pretty much trouble-free.”

The 40 ft. wide door allows trucks and loaders to move around easily without worrying about hitting the door frame, he said. And the concrete pad out front gives the county maximum flexibility in accepting deliveries.

“If a salt delivery shows up on a weekend or after hours, for example, it can be unloaded without someone being there. We just check the shipment against the ticket, later,” said Meredith.

For more information
If you have any questions about Riley County’s salt storage shed, call Rod at (785) 539-2981.

Publicize your snow plans!

The City of Gillette, Wyoming, has a comprehensive program for informing the public about their snow and ice control plan. Sure, they get more snow than most areas in Kansas, but their good ideas may be just the thing Kansas cities and counties might employ to get the public support needed for a successful program.

Public information pieces
The City of Gillette mails two one-page brochures along with utilities bills. Snow and Ice Control Materials: Everything You’ve Wanted to Know and More! is a question-and-answer style brochure that describes materials and how they work. Snow and Ice Control: There’s No Business Like Snow Business explains the city’s plowing priority system, describes the materials the city plans to use and includes a photograph of the crew that will provide the service.

Another idea to build public support for your snow program: Sponsor a community-wide plow-blade painting contest. Gillette’s program gets the high schools involved. Citizens enjoy seeing their favorite mascots “eating up” the snow.

Gillette also produces a four-page newspaper insert on snow and ice control. This piece combines information from both brochures and is distributed in the local newspaper.

Go to page 15 to request copies of Gillette’s materials for the public.
KDOT to add local consultation to priority-setting process

... by Lisa Harris

KDOT has been meeting with local officials to obtain ideas about how local governments could help KDOT set priorities for project funding on the state highway system. KDOT hosted eight focus groups of local government officials around the state this past Spring to initiate dialogue. About 125 local officials participated, all told. These officials were mostly either elected officials or road department senior staff from cities and counties, identified by KDOT district personnel. Participants also included three state senators and seven state representatives.

Some background

The meetings were held to address goals at both the state and national levels. Nationally, in 2002 the Federal Highway Administration required states to develop a local consultation process. Kansas must submit a local consultation policy to FHWA by February 24, 2006, that told these ways KDOT intends to involve local governments in statewide transportation planning.

Meanwhile, Kansas has initiated its Partnership Project (P2), designed to increase KDOT’s responsiveness to the public. (See our article on P2 in the Fall 2004 issue, page 8.) The P2 initiative included a new Local Consultation Committee to improve local government participation in KDOT. One objective of that committee was to look at how local communities might participate in setting priorities for projects to be completed on state highways.

Goals for local consultation

KDOT has three primary goals for a future local consultation process for state system projects. The goals for the process emphasize fairness, credibility, and good working relationships:
1) It must be a systematic process, so KDOT can consider local officials’ views along with regional priorities;
2) It must nurture relationships with local officials;
3) It must be a credible process that is understood and supported by local officials statewide.

The meetings

Focus groups met in Garden City, Hays, Salina, Hutchinson, Wichita, Topeka, Chanute and Olathe in Spring 2005. KDOT staff described the current method for prioritizing projects (see above), and asked for feedback on how the current system is working. Then participants were asked how the process might be improved, and they assembled into smaller groups for facilitated brainstorming on that topic.

The results

Benefits and drawbacks of the current priority-setting process, identified by the participants, appear on the next page. KDOT will use this information as they consider ways to update the process.

How KDOT sets state-system priorities now

KDOT has been setting priorities for state road and bridge projects using a formula that assigns weights to specific safety factors on roadway segments. They use a three-step process:
1) KDOT staff identify road sections that have need for improvement, based on factors such as accident rate, pavement condition, geometric characteristics, traffic volume, etc. These factors are weighted and each road section is scored accordingly. The highest scoring sections are those with the greatest need for improvement.
2) Initial priorities for state projects are set, based on the above scores, with the highest scores getting the highest priority.
3) KDOT staff determine which sections can be gathered together to make a logical project, and develop a preliminary scope of improvements. Scopes are matched with funding opportunities, and projects that have sufficient funding and the highest priority are programmed.

There is little opportunity for local input in priority-setting using this process. KDOT intends to change that.

Comments from participants

David Spears, Wichita public works director, attended the Wichita focus group. He said a problem with the current system for setting priorities is that the formula does not take into account interchanges. “We have some
Focus group participants identified pros and cons of the current priority-making process for projects on state roads:

**Benefits**
- It is objective
- Recognizes truck traffic
- Projects are getting done
- Process is handled by those with the expertise
- Helps in long-term planning

**Drawbacks**
- Doesn't allow input into project scoping
- Doesn't include interchanges or new roads envisioned for the future
- Doesn't consider local economic or land use issues
- Doesn't take into account community issues
- Process is poorly understood

interchanges down here that need serious work,” he said, and cited the I-235 and US-54 interchange as an example. Spears favors changing the formula to account for, and give weight to, critical interchanges in need of repair or replacement.

Bob Wetmore, president and CEO of the Dodge City Chamber and Development Corp., attended the Garden City focus group. Wetmore said the group’s work was “very helpful in that we learned more about the current process, and then we sat down and discovered and discussed ways to improve the process.” The main message out of his group was to allow for local input early in the process of setting priorities. A lot of qualitative and anecdotal information does not make it into the current process, he said, and some of that information is critical to the process of helping decide which projects need the most attention. “We even talked about how to label that information so it can be effectively incorporated in a decision-making process,” Wetmore said. “It all boils down to better communication.”

Richard Cramer, Scott County’s public works director, thinks getting local officials involved in setting statewide priorities is a smart decision for KDOT. “[Local officials] live there and they drive those roads every day. They know the problem areas. It’s a great idea to get their input...plus, people appreciate being asked,” he said.

While Cramer thinks the greatest benefit for closer collaboration will be for KDOT and larger cities in the state, he sees possible benefits for more rural areas as well. For example, in his county Cramer sees traffic backed up for half a mile behind cattle or grain trucks trying to turn off a state highway. Longer turning lanes would help, he said.

**What’s next?**
Ron Kaufman, public involvement administrator for KDOT, said they were very pleased with the number and variety of ideas gathered at the focus groups. KDOT is in the process of assembling those comments and developing some options to consider for changing the current process to allow for local participation. These options will then be shared with focus group participants and other local officials from around the state, for comment.

The final recommendation will be sent to FHWA as part of the local consultation policy.

Ultimately, the most significant action to come out of these efforts will be more effective priority-setting for state projects, with meaningful input from local officials. Kaufman anticipates that the new process will be used to help develop projects that could be funded after the current Comprehensive Transportation Program ends in 2009.

For more information, call Ron Kaufman at (785) 296-3769.

Both U.S. and Kansas fare poorly on ASCE Report Card

... by Courtney Hansen ..............

Since 1998, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) has been evaluating the condition of the nation’s infrastructure—and it doesn’t look good. Overall, the country received a D in their 2005 report, down from a D+ in both 2001 and 2003. The ASCE estimates that $94 billion is needed annually to bring America’s infrastructure to an acceptable level, much higher than the current spending of $59.4 billion.

The ASCE’s report card is designed to provide general suggestions for bringing up the nation’s infrastructure grade point average and identify areas that need significant improvement. The report card evaluates 12 categories of infrastructure which are assessed by an advisory board of engineers, some from local governments.

**America’s roads and bridges**

America’s roads received a D, while bridges stayed the same with a C. While the U.S. has seen a decrease in the number of structurally deficient or functionally obsolete bridges in the past few years, those that do still exist are posing problems which range from increased congestion to compromised safety. The report points out that traffic congestion causes Americans to sit in traffic 3.5 billion hours annually, costing the economy $63.2 billion. Even maintaining roads...
**X** marks the spot

Engineering department goes a-rovin’ to help county save money on mapping project.

. . . by Laura Snyder . . .

In 2003, the mapping department of the Lyon County Appraiser’s Office contracted out for aerial photographs to be taken of the county. The photographs were needed to update the county appraisal maps. The project required two tasks of the county: 1) identify geographic coordinates of specific locations in the county, as reference points, and 2) temporarily mark those locations on the ground with white plastic “X”es large enough to show up in the photographs. [The mapping company needed those coordinates marked to fix distortions inherent in aerial photographs so the images would correspond with existing maps.]

The appraiser’s office asked the county’s engineering department if they would be willing to do these tasks so they not have to hire it out. The engineering department agreed, and rented Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment to help.

Jim Brull, assistant county engineer, said the county rented the Sokkia Radian IS Base and Rover for $1,050 per week from Fieldworks, a surveying company. The surveying process began by setting the base unit at particular points for which coordinates were already known. These served as reference points to find the coordinates of other locations. Brull then took the rover to different locations within a four-mile radius of each base point and the rover calculated the coordinates of each of location. Brull said there were close to 100 locations recorded, in all. Accuracy is within three-eighths of an inch, per the rovers’ manufacturer.

The county used re-bar to mark each location so each could be found later with a metal detector. That way, the next time the county has aerial photographs taken, they won’t have to go through the location process for those points again. They will just need to find the re-barred locations and mark them with “X”es.

White plastic strips 2 ft. by 14 ft. were used to mark the locations [in the right-of-way] so they could be seen from an airplane. Brull said five or six workers were needed for the marking project, but he did all of the GPS locating himself. The entire process took about two and a half weeks.

Although it could be seven years before the appraiser’s office will need aerial photographs taken again, Brull said he was pleased with the process and will probably rent the GPS equipment again—for infrastructure management projects. The technology would also save the engineering department time in future surveying work, as fewer crew members are needed when using the rover.

For more information, contact Jim Brull at (620) 340-8220.

---

**Did you know?** Lyon County shares a GIS coordinator with the City of Emporia. Becky Samuelson is a city employee, but works half time for Lyon County, which pays half her monthly wage. There are weeks when more time is spent at one location than the other, but Samuelson makes sure each entity gets a good deal. The city and county share data but maintain separate software and servers.

---

**ASCE report card, continued from page 5**

as they are will require a significant increase in spending throughout all levels of government.

**Infrastructure in Kansas**
The ASCE reported in 2005 that 23 percent of the state’s bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, barely better than reported in 2003. An ASCE survey of civil engineers in Kansas in 2003 showed that their top infrastructure concern was roads.

Meanwhile, the national transportation bill that allocates money to states, the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st century (TEA-21), officially expired in 2003 and after two years of continuing resolutions has been replaced by a new bill. TEA-21 and its predecessor, ISTEA, provided over $2 billion for transportation improvements in Kansas. The new bill provides about the same amount, over six years. Some of that is already earmarked for specific projects.

While federal funds certainly help with the maintenance of the nation’s transportation services, ASCE states it is clearly not enough.

**Preparing for the future**

With a growing federal deficit, resources for infrastructure are scarce, but the need for investment is growing. Without adequate improvement, our nation’s infrastructure GPA will soon dip below its already dismal 1.3. Worse than receiving a failing grade, however, is the possibility that the infrastructure itself will fail. To fight this very real threat, the ASCE recommends forging a partnership between citizens, the private sector, and local, state and federal governments to create long-term changes in the way we treat the backbone of our country.

For more information on ASCE’s Report Card, visit www.asce.org/reportcard.
Mentoring at the supervisory level

Mentoring can be a very effective professional development tool, with tangible benefits for your organization. Here are three ways to approach it at the supervisory level.

Me and you
Informal mentoring. Most mentoring at the supervisory level is informal, involving two people—a new supervisor and a more experienced supervisor or administrator. The relationship can develop a number of ways, including sharing outside interests, work interaction and one party seeking out the other. Obviously, while this method may be very effective in specific cases, it is unreliable as a policy.

Formal mentoring. Some agencies have structured mentoring as part of their workforce development program. Planned mentoring primarily focuses on the goals of the organization, such as increasing productivity, eliminating turnover and reducing absenteeism. Focusing on these aspects usually results in benefits to both the organization and the new supervisor.

This type of mentoring has a formal, structured approach; the mentor and new supervisor are not concerned with developing a friendship as much as they are interested in meeting the organization’s needs. It usually involves matching participants based on career paths. The organization trains the participants to understand their roles as mentor and new supervisor. At some point progress is evaluated to determine the results, such as advantages, cost effectiveness, and difficulties.

Me, myself and I
If neither of these options are available to a new supervisor, self mentoring may be the only option. This approach differs significantly from formal mentoring in that it is more a strategy than a program. There is no mentor who promotes the development of a new supervisor. Rather, the individual cultivates his or her own professional growth through self-tutoring activities and resource-finding.

Self-mentoring requires highly motivation and self-discipline, but the rewards are significant. Here are five self-mentoring strategies that successful individuals have used.

1. Ask questions and listen carefully to the experts in your field of interest. This includes finding out who is the authority on a subject and asking detailed questions. Talk to people who are in positions to which you aspire.

2. Read and research materials in the field. Learn new information from trade magazines and books.

3. Observe people in leadership positions. Individuals can learn a lot about the inner workings of the city or county and different leadership styles simply by watching those in authority.

4. Attend educational programs. Educational programs may include conferences, seminars, LTAP workshops, night classes or city or county training courses.

5. Seek out new opportunities. Volunteer for projects or join professional organizations.

If you are an administrator, may want to alert your new supervisors to these strategies. A new supervisor should be encouraged to look for opportunities to develop independently, outside the traditional mentoring arena.

Dave Grouchy is training contractor and works primarily with LTAPs across the United States.

PowerPoint time savers

Creating a blank screen. When giving a PowerPoint presentation, you can temporarily display a black screen by pressing “B” or a white screen by pressing the “W” key. Return to your slide show by pressing the B or W again, or press the space bar to return and advance. This option is especially useful if you want to temporarily draw attention away from the screen.

Jumping to a specific slide.
You can jump directly to a specific slide from anywhere in your sequence, by typing the number of the slide you want, then pressing Enter.

It may help to print out your presentation outline ahead of time, so that you have the slide numbers listed with the slide titles handy. If you are not sure what slide number you are looking for, you can right-click the mouse on the slide, click GO, then By Title. This brings up a list of slide titles from which you can select the appropriate one to display.

Reprinted with permission from Skillset, University of Kansas Instructional Services, Summer 2005.
Walk this way

A pedestrian advisory committee can help identify and address a community’s particular pedestrian safety concerns.

... by Laura Snyder ............... 

Pedestrian advisory committees (PACs) are springing up all over the Midwest, from Colombia, Mo., to Lincoln, Neb., to Lawrence, Kan. What are these PACs, what is their role, and how do they affect what you do in the public works department? Here are some facts about PACs.

Why PACs?
PACs are formed to bring focused attention to pedestrian safety concerns. In 2003, Kansas had 25 pedestrian fatalities, contributing to the United States total of 4,749 pedestrian fatalities for that year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). That means one pedestrian died in a traffic crash nearly every 90 minutes in the United States. Pedestrian injuries are even more frequent—about one every eight minutes.

Kansas, like many Midwestern states, is faced with two challenges that complicate the pedestrian issue—rapid growth in some areas and a rapidly aging population in other areas. With growth comes congestion, increasing the likelihood of pedestrian/vehicle conflicts. In areas with a higher proportion of elderly residents, many of those seniors may be no longer able to drive and have few options other than to walk.

However, walkinginfo.org, a pedestrian information Web site, notes that pedestrian issues affect everyone, because we are all pedestrians. Even if you are simply walking from your car to the post office, you are a pedestrian. The site also argues that communities are not as walkable as they should be, especially because people with disabilities cannot travel without encountering barriers.

“Pedestrians don’t always receive the same level of importance in the planning and design of roadways,” says Aaron Bartlett, member of the Kansas MidAmerica Regional Council Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. PACs aim to correct this problem. And many are making progress.

What do they do?
What a PAC does depends on why it was formed. Some PACs may have a parent committee they report to. In Lawrence, the PAC reports to the city’s Traffic Safety Commission. Lawrence’s PAC will focus on building public awareness, making Lawrence more walkable, and implementing an ongoing pedestrian safety campaign.

In Lincoln, Neb., the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee participated in the city’s multi-model transportation study. The purpose of the study was to try to address all forms of transportation and figure out a way to coordinate them. It resulted in a half-time position being funded in the planning department to work on implementing the suggestions from the study. “We want people to try to rely less on vehicles and more on walking, bicycling,” says Terry Genrich, Natural Resources and Greenways Manager for the City of Lincoln.

Columbia, Mo.’s Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee took the initiative to take photographs of all major intersections and write up the bike-ped challenges of each. Frederick Schmidt, Columbia BPAC member, says this has helped motivate the city to do a study of intersections. The city asked the Columbia BPAC to come up with their top 10 problem intersections, and promised to give them priority in the next capital improvement budget.

Who are PAC members?
Members of PACs or bicycle/pedestrian advisory committees can help identify and address a community’s particular pedestrian safety concerns. In Columbia, Mo., the committee was asked to come up with their top 10 problem intersections, and promised to give them priority in the next capital improvement budget.
an advisory committees are diverse. In Iowa, Columbia, Mo., and Lincoln, Neb., committee members include members of the planning and zoning commission, metropolitan planning organization, parks and recreation commission, Association of County Conservation Boards, engineers, bicyclists, and pedestrians. “The idea is to have a good cross-section of the community,” says Bartlett.

Working with a PAC
A road and bridge department should expect to interact frequently with a Pedestrian or Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee. In Columbia, Schmidt says the BPAC communicates frequently with the public works department about what’s going on, and its members are asked to attend on different public works projects, such as crosswalks. In Lincoln, the public works department has staff members on the BPAC. “If there are certain issues that need to be addressed by public works officials, they are asked to attend,” says Genrich.

There are benefits to a government in forming a PAC, besides increasing safety for its citizens. For one thing, committee members can do research to assist other government committees or staff. Forming a PAC is also good for public image: It shows that the government cares about pedestrians, some of whom are the community’s more vulnerable citizens.

For more information on PACs, contact Aaron Bartlett of the Kansas MARC Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee at abartlett@marc.org

Sources

Which is the better deal?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reclaim</td>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>$15,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pave</td>
<td>$39/ton</td>
<td>46,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$62,700</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reclaim</td>
<td>$1.58</td>
<td>$15,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pave</td>
<td>$45/ton</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$60,800</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1999 figures)

Question: What’s the better deal between the following quotes from two paving contractors?

Let’s say you have solicited prices from asphalt suppliers to reclaim and pave a two-inch base course of asphalt on Gulch Road.

Your request simply stated: “Reclaim and pave one mile of Gulch Road with two inches of hot mix.”

Two contractors submitted prices as shown in the box above. (Note that these are 1999 figures).

Answer: At first glance, it appears that Contractor B offers the better deal by $1,900. However, because the request did not specify estimated quantities for the job (square yards of reclaiming and tonnage for paving), contractors did their own estimates. Each gave different estimates. Because the town will be paying for actual square yards and actual tons (unit costs), Contractor A might be the better deal when all is said and done. But it all depends on the amount of material actually reclaimed and the tons of asphalt actually put in place. To be more assured of the quantities, you have to do a little math.

Square yards: Measure the actual length of the road. Is it 5,280 feet or is it 5,493 feet? How wide is the road? Is it 19 feet or 20 feet? That one foot can make a big difference in the final cost. Multiply the length by the width to get square feet. Divide that number by 9 to get square yards. In your request for proposals, also specify the depth of reclaiming.

Tons of asphalt cement: To figure the number of tons, use a chart. There are .112 tons of asphalt cement per square yard at two inches thick. Make sure you specify “two inches compacted in place.”

Even if you do the math correctly your estimates for total tonnage might be off. Do you expect the contractor to pave aprons to driveways and side roads, for example? Those quantities add up.

To protect yourself and to ensure the contractors are bidding on the same specifications, use unit prices. Units and unit prices will prevail in the final analysis. Without them, if your estimated quantities are lower than what is needed to do the job, your final cost may be well over budget.

Bottom line: When preparing specifications, be specific!

Reprinted with permission from Vermont Local Roads, Vermont LTAP, October 1999. Adapted from a conversation with Gus Lerandeau and Ron Puchalski of All States Asphalt, Sunderland, MA.
High-Performance Concrete (HPC) Structural Designer’s Guide—on CD, FHWA, 2005. The main objective of this CD is to provide information to structural designers for the design and construction of highway bridges and related structures using high performance concrete. The information will be useful to engineers, contractors, researchers and industry.

Work Zone Safety for Maintenance Operations on Rural Highways, Part 5, Flagging Operations and Procedures, ATSSA. This videotape provides a clear and thorough overview of flagging procedures during some basic work zone scenarios. It also stresses the importance of professional appearance in creating credibility and authority with the public in doing this dangerous job. The production uses a professional narrator and demonstrates proper flagging techniques by showing flaggers at a work site. This is a quality production and an excellent primer for new flaggers. 18 minutes.

Key Safety Tips at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings, Operation Lifesaver, 1998. This brochure describes how to respond to the various warning devices at grade crossings, and provides tips for safely crossing railroad tracks. Also contains contact information for Operation Lifesaver, which provides free face-to-face highway-rail safety training.

---

See our web site for even more calendar listings. Go to www.kutc.ku.edu and click on “Training Calendar.”
Free Resources

Check off your selections, fill in the bottom portion, and return this form to:
KUTC Materials Request, 1530 W. 15th St., Room 2160, Lawrence, Kansas 66045
or fax to 785/864-3199

Videotapes .................
Two-week loan period. Two video limit per request.

☑ Work Zone Safety for Maintenance Operations on Rural Highways, Part 5, Flagging Operations and Procedures
   18 minutes, ATSSA.

Publications & CDs ...........
You are free to keep these unless otherwise noted.

☑ Snow and Ice Control Materials: Everything You’ve Wanted to Know and More! —brochure
   City of Gilette, Wyoming.

☑ Snow and Ice Control: There’s No Business Like Snow Business! —brochure
   City of Gilette, Wyoming.

☑ Snow and Ice Control: There’s No Business Like Snow Business! —newspaper insert
   City of Gilette, Wyoming.

☑ Key Safety Tips at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings

☑ High Performance Concrete (HPC) Structural Designer’s Guide —on CD
   FHWA, 2005.

Equipment .................
We offer turning movement counter boards for loan to local highway agencies. Call us at (785) 864-5658 to arrange a loan. There could be a waiting list for these items.

Order Form ...........................................

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>E-mail address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Zip+4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

☑ send materials indicated
☑ address correction
☑ add to newsletter mail list

Note: Our video and publication catalog is accessible online, in a searchable format. Visit: www.ksltap.kutc.ku.edu

*For requests outside the United States: After receiving your request, we will notify you of the postage cost and will send materials after receiving payment for postage.
Let us at the KUTC help you find the answers to your transportation-related questions.

KUTC, 1530 W. 15th St. #2160, Lawrence, KS, 66045
Call 785/864-5658 (fax 785/864-3199)
www.ksltap.kutc.ku.edu

The Kansas Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is an educational, research and service program of the Kansas University Transportation Center (KUTC), located in the University of Kansas School of Engineering. Its purpose is to provide information to local and county highway agencies and transportation personnel by translating into understandable terms the latest technologies in the areas of roads, highways and bridges.

The KUTC Newsletter is one of the KUTC’s educational activities. Published quarterly, the newsletter is free to counties, cities, townships, tribal governments, road districts and others with transportation responsibilities. Editorial decisions are made by the KUTC. Engineering practices and procedures set forth in this newsletter shall be implemented by or under the supervision of a licensed professional engineer in accordance with Kansas state statutes dealing with the technical professions.

Summer 2005 issue—Copyright © 2005 by the KUTC. All rights reserved. Reproduction of material in this newsletter requires written permission.

KUTC Executive Director ................. Pat Weaver
LTAP Directors ................. Pat Weaver and Tom Mulinazzi
Editor ......................... Lisa Harris
Contributing Writers .......... Courtney Hansen, Laura Snyder
................................. Dave Grouchy, Rose Lichtenberg

KUTC Resource and Education Staff
Traffic and Hwy. Engineering .......... Joe Lee / Tom Mulinazzi
Road Surface Mgmt./Soils ................. Bob Parsons
Bridge Structures, GIS and CAD .......... Carl Kurt
Mass Transit Planning .......... Pat Weaver
Engineering Computer Applications .......... Mehrdad Givechi
Drainage .......................... Dave Parr
Environmental Engineering ................. Dennis Lane
Specialized Transportation .......... Pat Weaver
Publications Manager (785) 864-2590 .......... Lisa Harris
Training Manager (785) 864-2594 .......... Rose Lichtenberg
Lending Library Coordinator (785) 864-5658 .......... Jason Pfister

2005 LTAP Program Advisory Committee
Susan Barker .......... Research and Materials, KDOT
Dean Chesnut .......... County Engineer, Reno County
Larry Emig .......... Local Projects, KDOT
Mark Huffhines .......... Kansas Division, FHWA
Cecil Kingsley .......... BG Consultants, Inc., Lawrence
Suzanne Loomis .......... City Engineer, Newton
Richard Maginot .......... Business Administrator, Soldier Township
J. R. McMahon II .......... Roads Superintendent, Miami County
Mike Novak .......... City Engineer, Lenexa
Bobb Stokes .......... Civil Engineering, Kansas State University
Richard Teaford .......... County Engineer, Jefferson County
Warren Chip Woods .......... County Engineer, Lyon County

The University of Kansas
KUTC Newsletter
K. U. Transportation Center
1530 W. 15th St., Room 2160
Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7609

Return Service Requested

co-sponsored by the FHWA and KDOT