

**Director's Board Report
February 2018**

Thank you Chairman Whitehead.

And good morning members of the Idaho Transportation Board.

Last week, the Trump Administration released its national infrastructure investment plan.

It calls for an increase in total investments, including rural states, and a reduction in costly regulatory burdens, but changes state matching requirements.

We appreciate the administration's interest in infrastructure improvements, and their understanding of rural transportation needs

We will have to wait to see how Congress addresses these issues.

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao is scheduled to testify at several congressional hearings in early March, for both the House and the Senate.

We will continue to work with our congressional delegation to promote additional investments in rural infrastructure, reduced regulatory burdens, and an increased focus on safety.

The national discussion on infrastructure investment is now underway, and we will keep the board up to date on important activities in Washington D.C. as they occur.

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On February 5th I presented the Governor's 2019 Budget Request for the Idaho Transportation Department to the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee.

The total request is for \$705.2 million dollars.

The Budget setting for our department is scheduled for March 7th.

By that time, most of the winter weather should be behind us.

The maintenance crews have done an outstanding job this year.

So far, they have kept the roads clear of snow and ice 85 percent of the time during storms.

As always, the mountain passes have kept the crews busy.

While their primary focus is on keeping the travel lanes clear, they also use graders and snow blowers to remove snow from the shoulders to increase safety, and to clear parking and chain-up areas.

Down in the lower elevations, we have addressed other types of issues.

On Monday night, February 6, a Meridian Public Works water main broke under Eagle Road and flooded the highway with up to 18 inches of water just south of Fairview Avenue.

This is the most heavily traveled section of state highway in Idaho.

The water main broke late in the evening, and the flooding and water erosion caused a half-mile section of the highway to be closed to all traffic.

Our crews immediately set up detours, notified the media, and then began assessing the damage on Tuesday morning when the sun came up.

Meridian Public Works,

the Meridian Police Department,

the Ada County Highway District,

L2 Excavators,

Central Paving. . .

and ITD worked together to safely reroute traffic, perform emergency repairs to the pipe, and rebuild the road.

The repair work required a deep trench to be dug ten feet wide and 40 feet long to gain access to the broken pipe.

Once the pipe was fixed, ITD contractors began repairing the erosion damage and rebuilding 70 feet of the five-lane highway, including two entrances to nearby businesses.

That included backfilling the trench, removing broken asphalt, rebuilding the road base, repaving the highway, and restriping.

Dave Dansareau, the TAMS coordinator for District 3, provided project oversight and quality control.

We reopened the highway to full traffic late Wednesday night, prior to the Thursday morning commute.

Thanks to great working relationships with local agencies, we were able to keep the public informed about the emergency repairs to Idaho's busiest stretch of state highway while keeping the work crews safe.

The entire project was completed in 48 hours.

And the costs of the emergency repairs will be paid by the City of Meridian.

When emergency situations like that happen, we use orange cones and signs to reroute traffic and keep everyone safe while the work crews are repairing the damage.

But when it comes to keeping the public safe by improving driving behavior, we use safety programs and advertising campaigns.

ITD's newest safety program, known as SHIFT, is working to reduce distracted driving by getting driver's more engaged in driving.

The SHIFT program is off to a great start, because it was honored with the **2018 AVA Platinum Award for Digital Marketing**.

The annual AVA awards honor excellence in digital creativity, branding, and strategy.

The SHIFT program was launched in October, with the goal of helping Idahoans reduce distractions so they can stay focused on driving, which is one of the ITD Strategic Safety Team's primary goals.

In 2016, distracted driving contributed to 25 percent of all fatal crashes in Idaho.

The SHIFT Program uses both print and electronic media, and is a collaboration between a creative team of ITD consultants and highway safety and research employees.

The AVA Digital Awards are administered and judged by the **Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals**, one of the most respected evaluators of creative work in the marketing and communication industry.

Winning the 2017 Platinum AVA Award for Digital Marketing is a major accomplishment, because it is an international award from the private sector.

It shows that ITD's accomplishments are being recognized outside of government, and far beyond our borders.

As an example, WASHTO has invited members of our SHIFT Project Team to make a presentation to the 18 western states at their Annual Meeting in South Dakota this summer.

Three highway projects in north Idaho also earned some recent recognition outside of our borders by winning **Quality Construction Awards**.

The National Asphalt and Paving Association awarded the honors to:

- The second stage of the US-95 project near Sheep Creek
- The US-95 project near Cougar Creek
- And the Interstate 90 project from Sherman Avenue to Blue Creek Bay Bridge.

The awards are based on pavement samples that were submitted to the **National Center for Asphalt Technology** in Alabama, where they were reviewed for quality and consistency.

District 1 Engineering Manager Marvin Fenn said, and I quote:

“Our project managers and materials engineers work with contractors to ensure that the public receives a high-quality product.”

End Quote

Brian Poe, a project manager for Poe Asphalt and Paving in Post Falls, said, and I quote:

“Collaborating with ITD engineers is always a positive experience.

It is great to work with a team that wants to deliver the best projects for the traveling public.”

End quote.

I would also like to share some good news in the Division of Motor Vehicles.

Randi Bristol-Hogue was selected for the 2018 American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrator’s Leadership Academy.

Randi was one of only 18 people from across the United States **AND** Canada who were selected to attend.

The leadership academy provides professional development opportunities for future leaders in the DMV community.

The program is for people who have demonstrated leadership potential, and the ability to succeed in positions of greater responsibility within their agencies.

The leadership academy will strengthen Randi’s current skills, and prepare her to take on broader responsibilities in the Division of Motor Vehicles.

We received a letter from Kathy Fermoye in McCall, and I would like to share a portion of it with you.

She wrote, and I quote:

“I wish to take some time to write a formal letter of commendation for one of your employees, Ms. Carol Leighton.

Over the course of two years, Ms. Leighton worked with me to obtain an abandoned lien sale title for a California car left on my property to obtain an Idaho title.

I want to thank both you and Ms. Leighton for her exemplary service to this great State of Idaho.

You should be proud to have her on your team.

Our journey with California was long and arduous, but never did she lose patience or get annoyed.

Also, I am severely disabled from a spinal injury and Ms. Leighton understood how trapped I am being a crippled woman alone in drastic winter conditions in McCall and worked as much as possible with my home fax instead of mailing to the post office, a place I cannot get to.

I pray you will place a commendation in her file for going above and beyond the call of duty on this case.

Ms. Leighton is a testament to what a government employee should be.

I was so Fortunate to have her on my side.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter of reference.

I am a better person for having known Ms. Leighton .

I am grateful for your cooperation in this matter.”

End Quote.

On Thursday of last week, Bud Wright, Executive Director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, awarded a **Transportation Management Fellowship** in Washington D.C. to Chad Clawson, District 2 Materials Engineer.

This is a one-year fellowship, during which Chad will work full time for the Engineering Division in the AASHTO Headquarters building.

Upon arriving in our nation’s capital, Chad will work for AASHTO as a loaned professional engineer.

His duties will include engineering and technical work in traffic engineering, design, materials, and operations.

Chad will also be working on policies with AASHTO committees and participating in the reauthorization of the FAST Act.

This is one of the most coveted engineering fellowships in the nation, and I am sure Chad is pretty excited about the experience.

And the valuable engineering knowledge he is going to gain and bring back to Idaho.

Chad, I know you are listening to this in District 2 right now.

This is a proud moment for you and the department.

We congratulate you on earning this fellowship, and wish you all the best in Washington D.C.

Well done!

Mr. Chairman and members of the board, this concludes my Director’s report for January.