Anchorage’s Glenn Highway: Using Online Survey Tools to Gather Public Input on a Major Corridor

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Overview

- Project Background
- Data Collection
  - Existing conditions and concerns within the corridor
- Public Engagement
  - Online Survey
- What do we do with all this data?
- Lessons Learned
Existing Conditions Concerns

- The corridor experiences non-recurring congestion due to unplanned events (crashes) and planned events (construction).
- No parallel routes of similar capacity and in some segments no parallel routes of any kind.
- Delays on the Glenn Highway are very disruptive and are associated with significant time, safety, and monetary costs.
Data Collection

- Highway Data from DOT&PF: weather, volume, speed, crashes
  - Parallel Route Analysis
  - Crash Analysis
  - Corridor Delay

- Stakeholder Agencies: current practices in managing the Glenn Highway

- General Public: current concerns with the Glenn Highway and alternate routes and procedures public currently uses in response to events.
General Public Outreach

Traditional Methods:
- Project Website
- Open House
- Community Council Presentations
- Transportation Fairs
- Listening Posts
Online Survey

- Virtual Public Involvement
- Reaches more people, especially the commuters
- Fast, easy way to gather input from the public
- Able to ask the same questions of every user for consistent data and quantifiable results
Information Gathered from Survey

- How often and when they use the Glenn
- Where they get on and off
- Where they get information about the traffic conditions
- Travel modes
- How flexible are travel times
- Issues/Concerns/Suggestions
Survey Outreach

- Transportation Fair
  - iPad tablets, business cards with survey URL
- Community Council Meetings
  - Business cards
- Project Website with a link
- Email with link to key stakeholders
- NextDoor social media site
- DOT&PF social media outlets
- GLENN HIGHWAY FACEBOOK PAGE

How did people find out about the survey?
Survey Participation

• Survey was live from February 5\textsuperscript{th} until April 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2018
• Survey posted on Facebook, February 12\textsuperscript{th}
• 65\% of responses between March 28\textsuperscript{th} and April 2\textsuperscript{nd}
• Bridge Strike on Glenn Highway, March 21\textsuperscript{st}

Total Participants: 4,891
March 21st – Bridge Strike on Glenn Hwy

- Damaged overpass
- Resulted in southbound traffic being diverted off the Glenn Highway

SOURCES: Anchorage Daily News and Alaska DOT&PF Facebook
Survey Results

- 5,000 participants
- 81,000 data points
- 15,000 comments
Survey Comments

- 15,000 comments
Analysis Methods

- Text Filters
- Categorization
- KMZ
- GIS Mapping
Map Survey Results

- Place three Markers on the Map and provide a comment about your concern or suggestion
  - Safety/Crashes
  - Road Conditions
  - Congestion
  - Wildlife
  - Other Issues
  - Suggestions

- Approximately 10,500 markers and 6,000 comments
Google Earth

All comments and markers

Bridge condition/bridge needs work
Bridge condition/bridge needs work
GIS Mapping

- Zip Code (Home and Destination)
What to do with all this data?

- Data was used to verify that the strategies/future projects recommended in our study reflect the needs and concerns of the traveling public.
- DOT&PF is moving forward on some of these identified projects:
  - Interchange Reconstruction Projects
  - Capacity Improvements
  - Glenn Highway Rehabilitation
- Phase II
Phase II: Develop Emergency Traffic Control Guidelines

- Bridge Strike incident March 2018 made the DOT&PF and legislatures aware that there was not a well-developed plan
- Information used from Phase I:
  - Where people get traffic information was used to develop a communications plan for incident management
  - Responses to how flexible users are was used to help us model traffic volumes after an incident
Lesson Learned

- Consider intended use of the data collected when writing questions
- Consider how you will analyze if few or large number of responses
- Identify existing communication channels that you can tap into for sharing your public involvement tool
- Continue to collect data even if an unexpected event occurs
  - 7.0 Earthquake happened while we were finalizing Traffic Control Plans for Phase II of the Glenn Highway
Thank You