



Managing Expectations - It's Not Rocket Surgery!

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Public Works Director**

Expectation?



Expectation?



Top Public Works Challenges

From American City and County magazine:

- Budget/funding 87%
- Infrastructure Quality 55%
- Public Expectations 45%
- Employee Morale 43%
- Public perception 27%

Really???

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SEE CLICK FIX »

1755 Selby Ave. on Wheeler St. side 1 person wants this fixed
1755 selby , St Paul, MN

Not enough right turn space to go east on Hwy 55 1 person wants this fixed
Hwy 55 exit off of Hwy 100 North, Hennepin, MN

Speeding cars on Juliet Ave 2 people want this fixed
396 S Macalester St, St Paul, MN

Pedestrian Crosswalk Button Non-Functioning 2 people want this fixed
22nd Ave S, Minneapolis, MN

pothole damaging 2 people want this fixed
Carleton St, St Paul, MN

Managing Expectations

- Understand the Environment
- Know the Audience
- Design the Strategy
- Plan the Tactics

Understand the Environment

#1 Demonizing of Public Service

#2 The “New Normal”

Understand the Environment

#1 Demonizing of Public Service

- Overpaid, lazy, inefficient
- Call to cut wages, benefits, pensions
- It's the government's fault
 - Too many regulations
 - Too many taxes
 - Too much spending

Understand the Environment



The ten most dangerous words in the English language are:

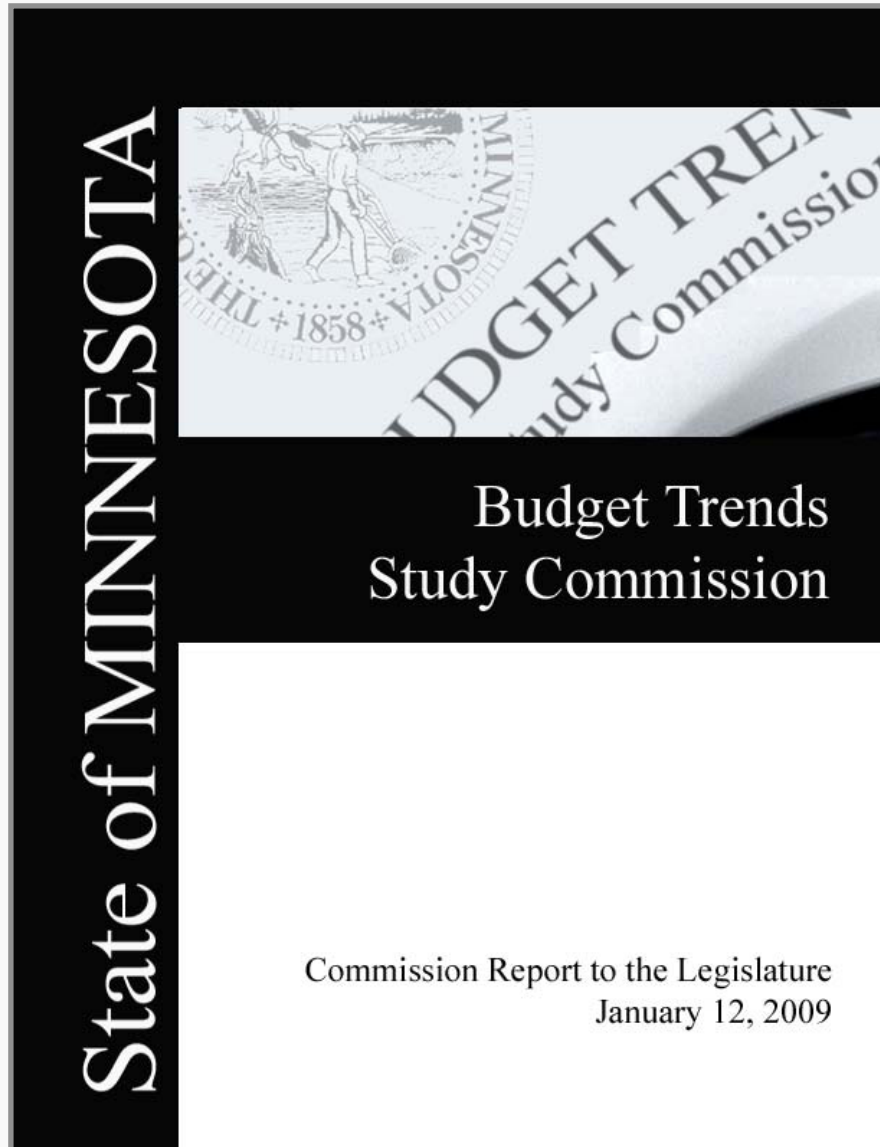
***“Hi,
I’m from the government and I’m here to help”***

Understand the Environment

2 *The “New Normal”*

- Still seen as a “cliché”
- People still EXPECT we will return to old normal with past growth patterns
- Changing demographics driving this

Understand the Environment



Understand the Environment

From Budget Trends Study Commission:

- “Minnesota is currently experiencing a major, long-range demographic shift.”



Understand the Environment

From Budget Trends Study
Commission:

- “Demographic and economic factors will lead to lower growth of state tax revenues over the next 25 years.”



Understand the Environment

From Budget Trends Study Commission:

- “Minnesota has a long term structural budget problem, with long term expenditure growth likely to outpace revenue growth.”



Understand the Environment

Tom Gillaspy
MN State Demographer



“The years 2008-2011 mark the entryway into the age of entitlement with Social Security and Medicare. Baby boomers are aging and retiring. We have been making promises to people for 50 years that are now starting to come due.”

Understand the Environment

What does this mean for managing a road system today?

- Recognize the perception of public service – not going to change overnight
- Accept the new normal – it is now about what you can sustain

Know the Audience

- #1 What do customers want?
- # 2 Response to change

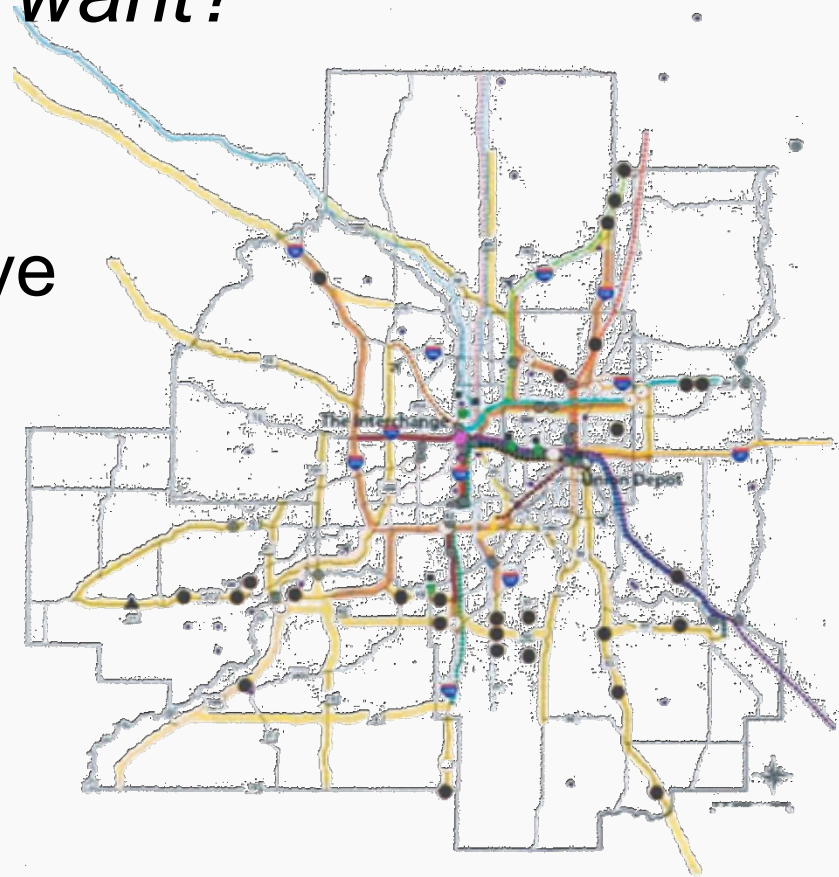


Know the Audience

#1 *What do customers want?*

Many sources:

- Long term comprehensive plans
- Project open houses
- Citizen surveys
- Feedback from commissioners



Know the Audience

#1 What do customers want?

Highway Departments can count on two “wants”

- Smooth roads
- Bare roads after a snow

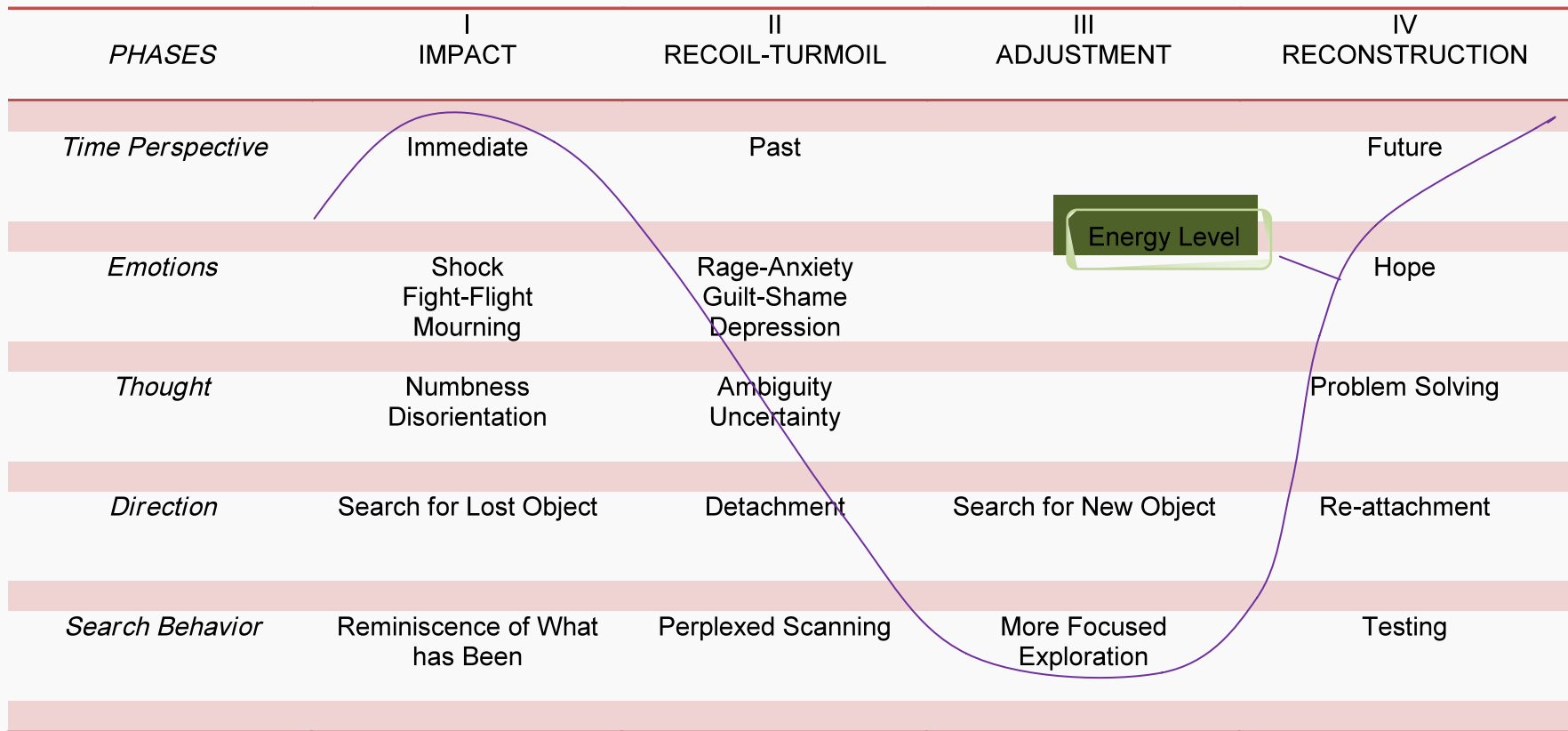


Know the Audience

#1 Response to change

Need to understand how people go thru change – especially if it will affect them personally

Know the Audience



Know The Audience

What does this mean for managing a road system today?

Good News – What people want easy to know

Bad News – Delivering this is complicated, may not be possible, and will require change

Design the Strategy

#1 Need a foundation with Board/Council

#2 What level of involvement will you embrace?

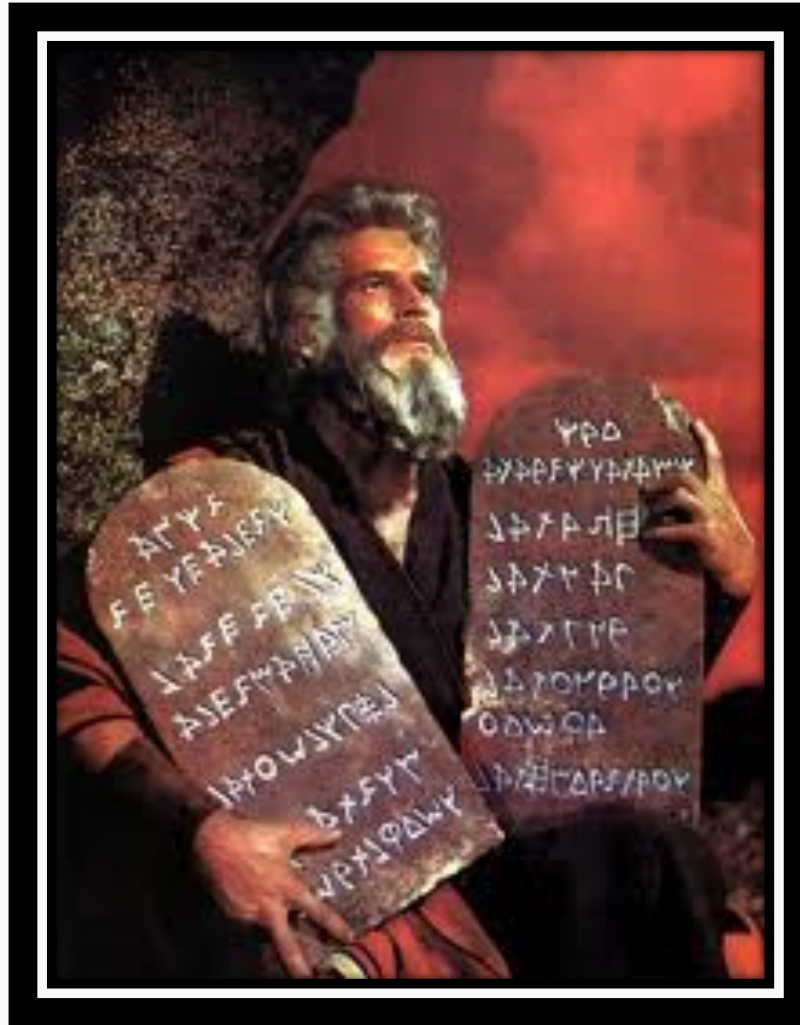
Design the Strategy

1# *Foundation with Board/Council (and public)*

- Need to build this with “little” things – take care of small issues
 - If you can’t handle small; why would they trust you on big?



Design the Strategy



Design the Strategy

#1 Foundation with Board/Council

Thou Shalt Obey the Ten Commandments:

1. Establish A Good Relationship With Your Board
2. Always Be Available To Each Board Member
3. Never Embarrass The Board Or A Member In Public
4. Never Show Animosity To A Board Or Member
5. Always Give Thanks And Praise To The Board

Design the Strategy

Thou Shalt Obey the Ten Commandments:

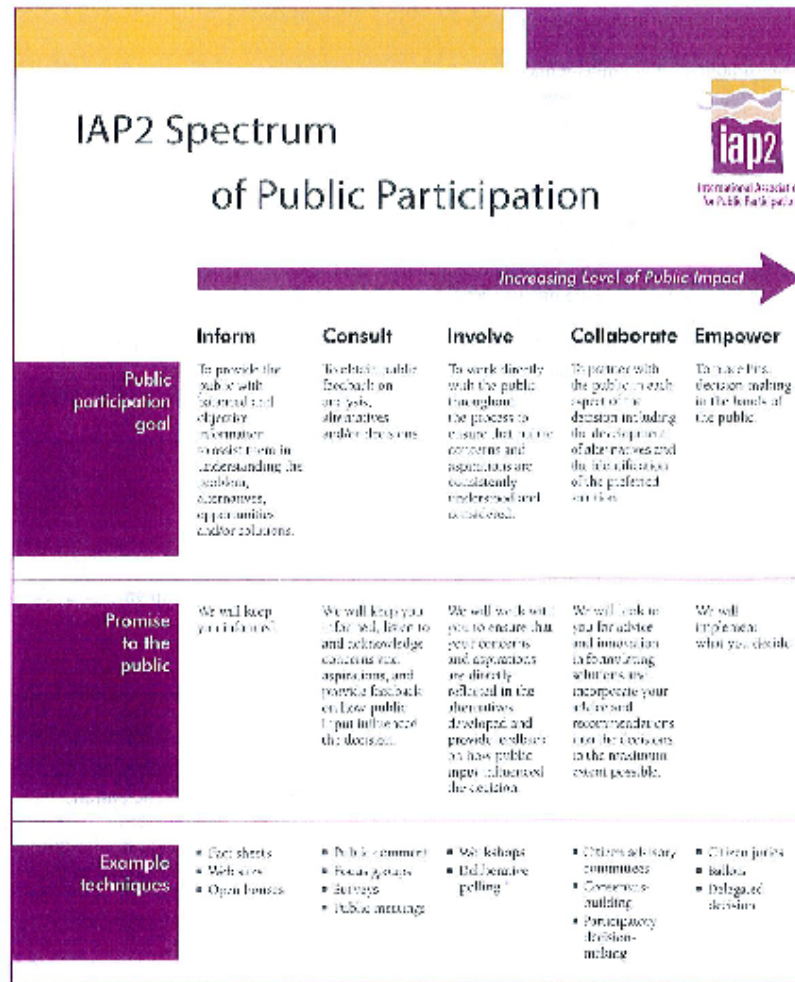
6. Not Ask The Board What To Do On An Engineering Issue
7. Treat Any Board Referred Complaint to You As Top Priority
8. Provide A Professional Recommendation
9. Learn Not Every Comment Needs A Response
10. Not Allow A Bad Vote To Be Taken

Design the Strategy

#2 What level of involvement will you embrace?

- Not give lip service but embrace
- CTS Report 11-24 “Suggested Design and Management Techniques for Enhancing Public Engagement in Transportation Policymaking” excellent resource

Design the Strategy



Design the Strategy

What does this mean for managing a road system today?

- You need to have a solid relationship with your Board/Council
- If you are going to affect resident's quality of life, your strategy needs to involve them

Plan the Tactics

#1 Social Media

#2 Using Technical Analysis

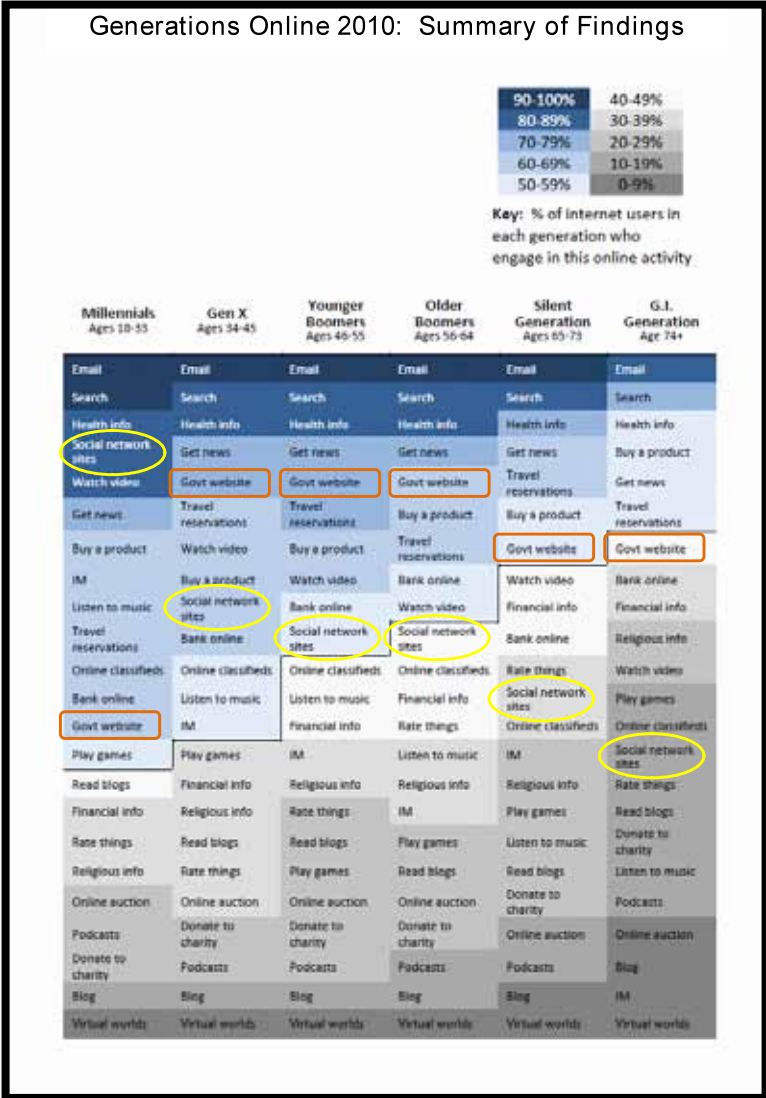
Plan the Tactics

#1 *Social Media*

- Need to go where people are, don't expect them to come to you



Plan the Tactics



Plan the Tactics

We are still learning how to effectively use Social Media on

- Planning issues
- Policy issues
- Design issues

Plan the Tactics

#2 Using technical analysis

The great myth:

Thorough, rigorous, technical analysis on public sector problems leads to agreement

Plan the Tactics

The truth:

Thorough, rigorous, technical analysis done in the open on problems affecting a diverse public leads to disagreement, lobbying, demands, posturing, polarization – not Agreement

Plan the Tactics

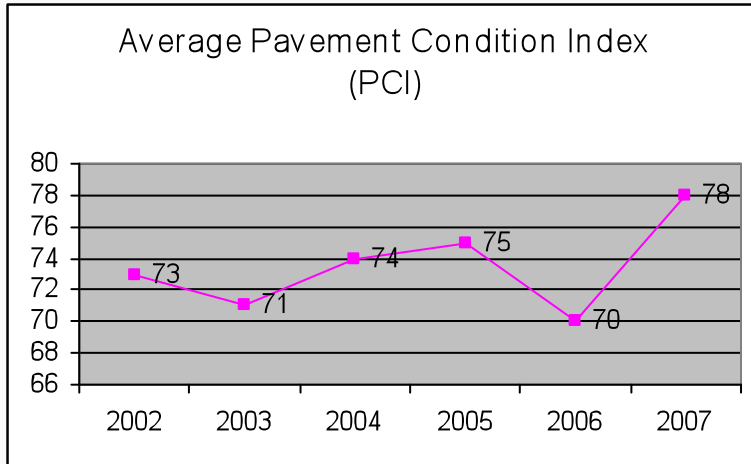
Need tactics that present technical analysis:

- So it tells a story
- Gets people to see this affects their quality of life
- Focus on the system – not a road

PCI Example



Transportation



Why is this measure important?

Maintaining pavement in a good condition is recognized as important from a standpoint of both user satisfaction (no one likes to drive on a rough road) and long-term performance (properly maintained roads last longer.)

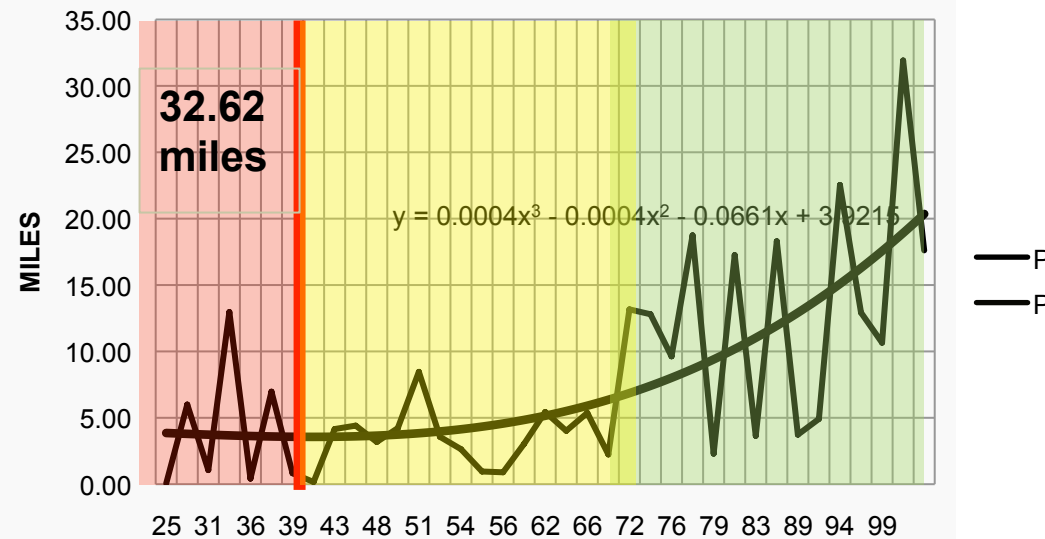
What will it take to maintain?

Our Goals are:

- Maintain an overall system at a PCI of 72
- Maintain roads with a minimum PCI of 40
- Use PCI to create a cost effective pavement preservation program

Tracking the PCI and identifying roads that fall below the minimum threshold can be used to determine the effectiveness of the pavement preservation program and the adequacy of funding resources.

PCI



Plan the Tactics

What does this mean for managing a road system today?

- Still figuring out how to use Social media but it is how, not when.
- Need to be system and quality of life focused.

Managing Expectations

Maybe it is Rocket Surgery...

- Understand the Environment
- Know the Audience
- Design the Strategy
- Plan the Tactics