



PRESS RELEASE

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Delaware Department of Transportation Proves Value of Time is as Important as Value of Money

I-95 Mainline Widening Project Uses Cost-Plus-Time Bid to Finish in Half the Time and Under Cost

Austin, TX/November 3, 2009 - The National Partnership for Highway Quality (NPHQ) has awarded its Gold Level National Achievement Award to The First State for its work on the I-95 Mainline Widening Project.

This section of I-95 known as "Churchman's Marsh," between SR1 and the split of I-95 and I-495, is the most highly congested roadway in Delaware. The project consisted of widening this four-mile stretch of highway surrounded by highly sensitive wetlands to the east and west of the existing alignment. The work zone was also bordered to the south by major businesses and to the north by the City of Wilmington. In addition, three major freeways, I-495, I-295 and State Route 1 all converged in this area along with a principle arterial collector road, Delaware Route 141.

The 8-lane section of I-95 carries nearly 230,000 vehicles per day with no real alternative routes for interstate travel. The corridor is also the lifeline for east coast travel, transport of goods and services, commerce, recreation and tourism.

During the award presentation, NPHQ Executive Director Bob Templeton said, "Delaware has demonstrated innovation in using a cost-plus-time bid, finishing 18 months ahead of schedule and \$8 million under the engineer's original estimate. This project has not only improved the public's commute, its safety and welfare, but has reinforced the value of partnering."

In 544 calendar days, DeIDOT and R.E. Pierson, its contractor, were able to widen the corridor, without closing any lanes during peak hours, minimizing impacts to all adjacent wetland, ensuring safety to the traveling public and workers, demanding quality, and finishing in half the time set out in the advertised schedule.

"Every year in the United States, countless time and billions of gallons of fuel are wasted as Americans sit in traffic. Traffic congestion increases air pollution that damages our environment and endangers our health. Delaware's I-95 Widening Project is helping to fix this problem," Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) said.

" With 230,000 vehicles traversing this stretch of highway every day, eliminating congestion is not just of local concern but also of national interest. When it works well, I-95 helps people get to work and school and is crucial to our economic productivity. Delaware's I-95 Mainline Widening Project is a vital step forward that will greatly improve business efficiency and cut fuel consumption for those who commute along the corridor daily," Congressman Michael N. Castle (R-DE) said.

"Despite the challenges, DeIDOT staff and the contractors made a tough widening project appear easy with a very cost competitive bid. We also created six acres of new wetlands along the Christiana River, where bald eagles have since nested," said Carolann Wicks P.E., Secretary of the Delaware Department of Transportation.

The NPHQ National Achievement Awards recognize overall project quality, the partnership between State departments of transportation and private contractors; technical and materials innovations; the effectiveness and creativity of public involvement; the teams' effectiveness in meeting or exceeding expected deadlines, costs and deliverables; responsiveness to environmental needs and opportunities; and adherence to other principles of quality management.

NPHQ is a national coalition of Federal, State and Municipal highway agencies, industry organizations and private firms founded in 1992 as the National Quality Initiative. For more than 15 years, NPHQ continues to be the only National program that brings Federal, State and Municipal highway agencies and private industry together to combine their expertise and to cooperatively lead the advancement in highway quality, safety and service to the highway users. For more information on the NPHQ and its awards: www.nphq.org. To learn more about Delaware's "Churchman's Marsh" Project: www.deldot.gov/information/projects/jfk_mem_hwy_improvement/i95-mainline/overview.shtml.

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