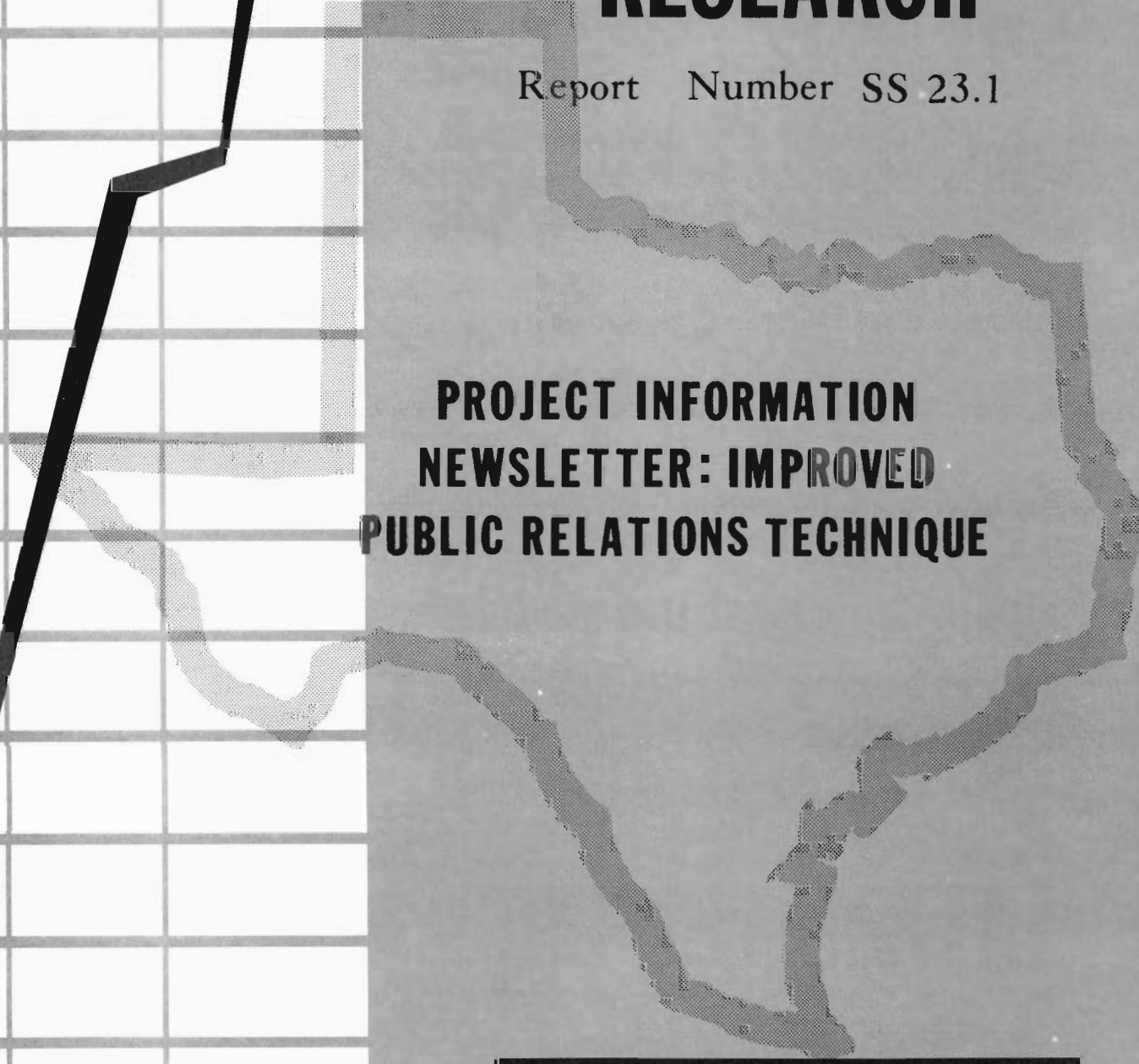



# DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH

Report Number SS 23.1



**PROJECT INFORMATION  
NEWSLETTER: IMPROVED  
PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUE**

STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

PROJECT INFORMATION NEWSLETTER:  
IMPROVED PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUE

by

Jack Light  
District Design Engineer  
District 4

Special Study Report No.

SS 23.1

Texas State Department of Highways and Public Transportation

June, 1982

In a complex modern society, it is necessary for every organization seeking public support to establish and maintain information programs in order to create a common ground of understanding with the public.

The public involvement process is one facet of such a program. It serves to identify public concerns and fears, and provides both the general public and the department with a two-way forum for transactional communication. Follow-up information programs can then be formulated, tailored to the project at hand, in order to conserve favorable public opinion, crystallize unformed or latent public opinion in the department's favor and, to the extent possible, change or neutralize hostile public opinion.

The Washington Street project provides an excellent example whereby a project which had a significant adverse encroachment impact upon the residents and businesses along the project limits could employ positive public affairs techniques to reduce initially unfavorable public opinion to manageable proportions and, ultimately, to neutral or even somewhat favorable opinion.

As indicated by the attached photographs, the widening and improvement of Washington Street along the project limits encroaches substantially on the residencies and businesses involved.

The extent of public concern although not unanticipated, became evident at the first public meeting on the project conducted on June 22, 1976.

Approximately 100 people attended this initial meeting, with roughly 50 expressing opposition to the project. At that time, the City of Anarillo was uncertain whether it would be able to fund its right of way obligations, which may have added to some of the public opposition.

A second public meeting, therefore, was held a year later, on August 25, 1977. This time, some 35 citizens attended, with continued opposition being voiced by a substantial number.

Citizen opposition aired at both meetings, coupled with the problems inherent in the project itself, served to indicate that a significant public affairs/opinion problem would have to be solved.

Although an opportunity for a public hearing was offered during April 1978, none was requested. This was an indication, albeit slight, that perhaps adverse public opinion was being at least neutralized as residents and businessmen became resigned to the project. The contract was let on January 14, 1981.

It was determined that an effective means of reaching the maximum number of persons involved with the project, with respect to residents and businessmen, would be a periodic progress report in the form of a newsletter.

Accordingly, a general format was devised by the district design engineer and his staff which would outline the project, report on the progress, include a sketch map of the project, and provide a timetable of events.

The newsletter, called The Washington Street Progress Report, is prepared monthly by the district design engineer, utilizing input from the district's project engineer and the contractor's superintendent, and coordinated with the district public affairs officer. It is distributed door-to-door to each residence and business within the project by personnel of the district design office. In addition, the public affairs officer makes distribution to the Amarillo print and broadcast news media.

Distribution is made on the first day of each month. Print run is 150 copies, utilizing available district printing facilities.

Copies of the first four issues of The Washington Street Progress Report, covering the months of March through June 1981, are appended. Inasmuch as, the project is slightly ahead of schedule, as of this writing, it is anticipated that two more issues will be necessary before the project is completed in late summer 1981.

While there has as yet been no formal attempt at gathering feedback, indirect comments by residents and businessmen reported through third parties have been quite favorable with respect to The Washington Street Progress Report. Moreover, the contractor has reported complaints from the people along the project as being "significantly fewer than we anticipated."

Conclusions: Once the problem area was identified, it became apparent that it would be important to keep the people along the project informed as to what could be expected, when it could be expected to occur, where the various phases of the project would be accomplished, how the phases would affect their near-and long-term mobility.

The vehicle employed to accomplish this, The Washington Street Progress Report, was distributed in such a manner as to ensure that the people most directly affected were kept informed and, through the mass communications media, that the community as a whole was kept informed. The extent to which this has been successful can only be measured, at this point, by the paucity of questions and complaints received from the public as compared with those received regarding projects of a similar circumstance.

It may be concluded that once the people affected know what is going to happen and when, they can adjust their lives accordingly and their perception of the severity of the project's impact is less unfavorable. Moreover, the

demonstration of the department's concern for the people, through the tangible evidence of the newsletter, is a definite plus factor in the department's relations with the public.

It is doubtful that a similar newsletter would be either warranted or desired for every construction project. At the same time, a single fact sheet, outlining the project, to include stages and timetables, and issued following the pre-construction conference would probably be a useful public affairs/opinion tool in many instances.



Views of front yards before construction



Views of front yards after construction. Curb & Gutter was moved out 13.5' on each side taking trees, sidewalks and requiring new driveways.



THE....

# WASHINGTON STREET PROGRESS REPORT

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PREPARED BY: STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 4

March - 1981

This report is the first monthly report to be published in an attempt to keep interested persons abreast of the happenings along Washington Street during the reconstruction of this roadway.

The contract for this construction was awarded to Gilvin-Terrill, Inc. on January 14, 1981, for a low bid of \$983,412.51. 75% of this amount is provided by the Federal Highway Administration with the State of Texas funding the remaining portion. The City of Amarillo has provided all of the right-of-way and utility adjustments.

Washington Street was widened to its present 40' width in 1951. This width provided two 12' lanes and two 8' parking lanes which was adequate at that time. As traffic volumes increased, parking was removed and the street was re-stripped for four lane operation. This made the lane widths 10' or less, which is too narrow for commercial traffic. The accident rate increased to 10.4 accidents per million vehicle mile.

The need for a wider facility was very apparent when anticipated traffic was projected to 15,000 vehicles per day in the year 2000.

The present 40' width street was built within an existing 60' of right-of-way. In order to widen the roadway to accommodate the anticipated traffic, an additional 10' of right-of-way was required on each side. The new roadway will be 67' in width to provide for four lanes and a continuous left turn lane down the middle. This width will provide adequate roadway for the present and future, as well as allowing safer ingress and egress to the adjacent property.

Construction on Washington Street will begin on March 16, 1981. Traffic will be routed to form two lanes on the west 24' of Washington Street. Work will begin on the north end of the east side with the removal of trees, removal of old sidewalks, drives, curb and gutter and roadway. When the construction of the east 33' of Washington is complete, the traffic will be moved from the west side to the east side. The west side will then be reconstructed.



New traffic signals will be installed on the frontage roads of IH 27 at Washington Street. The roadway should be complete during the first week of September, 1981.

This newsletter is general. The next letters will be more specific and anticipate each phase of construction, block by block. We feel that if you know what to expect that you will be more tolerant of the construction. We will try to keep traffic along Washington Street at all times and adjacent property will have access except for short periods of time.

Mr. George Cannon is the Supervising Resident Engineer on this project. Mr. Everett Bryan will be the Project Engineer, and Mr. Bill Cain will be the Chief Inspector. Their office is located at 5th & Parker and their telephone number is 376-5253.



THE....

# WASHINGTON STREET PROGRESS REPORT

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PREPARED BY: STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 4

April - 1981

This is the second report on the progress of the project to reconstruct South Washington Street. It is quite obvious that the construction is underway and the traffic is now detoured to the west side of the street. During the month of April, all construction will be on the east side of Washington Street. Removal of trees, sidewalks, driveways, curb and gutter, and old pavement is now underway beginning at the IH 27 frontage road and moving south.

The project will be broken into 4 separate sections.

Section 1 - is from IH 27 south approximately 1200' to 40th Avenue.

Section 2 - will be from 40th Avenue to approximately 250' north of 42nd Avenue.

Section 3 - will be from 250' north of 42nd Avenue south approximately 200' south of 43rd Avenue.

Section 4 - will be from approximately 200' south of 43rd Avenue south to the end of the project.

The work will also be performed in 6 phases.

Phase I - Clearing trees, rough grading, removal of curb and gutter, sidewalks, driveways, and excavation of excess material.

Phase II - Lime treatment of subgrade. This includes mixing lime with the subgrade by use of a rototilling type equipment and addition of water. This will make a much more stable subgrade.

Phase III - Base material. This includes the hauling and spreading of base material over a prepared subgrade. After spreading and rolling, this base will be approximately 12" in depth.

Phase IV - This will include the placing of curb and gutter, sidewalks, driveways, and retaining walls.

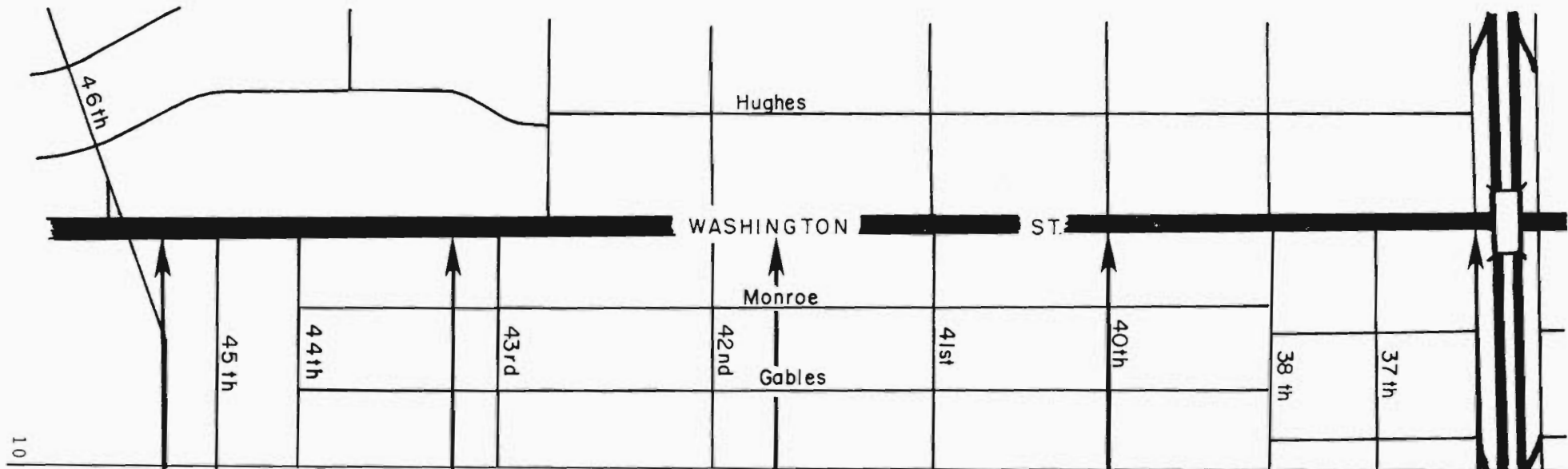
Phase V - Seal coat on surface of flexible base.

Phase VI - Final hot mix asphaltic pavement and striping.

During the month of April the following work sequence will be attempted on the east side.

April 1 to April 3	Section 1 - complete Phase I start Phase II
	Section 2 - start Phase I
April 6 to April 10	Section 1 - complete Phase II
	Section 2 - continue Phase I
April 13 to April 17	Section 1 - start Phase III
	Section 2 - complete Phase I start Phase II
	Section 3 - start Phase I
April 20 to April 24	Section 1 - complete Phase III
	Section 2 - complete Phase II
	Section 3 - complete Phase I
April 27 to April 30	Section 1 - start Phase IV
	Section 2 - start Phase III
	Section 3 - start Phase II
	Section 4 - start Phase I

We will attempt to keep driveways open every morning and evening. It will be difficult, however, to keep all driveways open at all times but if you need special help with this problem, please let us know and we will try to work with you. We hope that by letting you know what our schedule is you can work with us to make this project have the least amount of adverse impact not only on the property owners but on the contractor and the traveling public. This schedule is flexible and it is hoped that it will be delayed because of a good general rain sometime during this month. If you have any questions contact Mr. George Cannon, Supervising Resident Engineer; Mr. Everett Bryan, Project Engineer; or Mr. Bill Cain, Chief Inspector. Their office is located at 5th and Parker and their telephone number is 376-5253. The field office is located at 46th and Washington and the field office number is 374-4156.



SECTION	④	③	②	①
April 1-3			START PHASE I	COMPLETE PHASE I START PHASE II
6-10			CONTINUE PHASE I	COMPLETE PHASE II
13-17		START PHASE I	COMPLETE PHASE I START PHASE II	START PHASE III
20-24		COMPLETE PHASE I	COMPLETE PHASE II	COMPLETE PHASE III
27-30	START PHASE I	START PHASE II	START PHASE III	START PHASE IV

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THE....

# WASHINGTON STREET PROGRESS REPORT

PREPARED BY: STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 4

May - 1981

This is the third report on the progress of the project to reconstruct South Washington Street. During the month of April the contractor was able to progress faster than anticipated. Construction through stage three is now complete on the East side. Most of the curb and gutter and some of the retaining walls and sidewalks are complete on Section 1 on the East side. We are again including a map with this report for a quick look at what is anticipated during May.

As stated in the last report, the project will be broken into four separate sections:

Section 1 - is from IH 27 south approximately 1200' to 40th Avenue.

Section 2 - will be from 40th Avenue to approximately 250' north of 42nd Avenue.

Section 3 - will be from 250' north of 42nd Avenue south approximately 200' south of 43rd Avenue.

Section 4 - will be from approximately 200' south of 43rd Avenue south to the end of the project.

The work will also be performed in 6 phases.

Phase I - Clearing trees, rough grading, removal of curb and gutter, sidewalks, driveways, and excavation of excess material.

Phase II - Lime treatment of subgrade. This includes mixing lime with the subgrade by use of a rototilling type equipment and addition of water. This will make a much more stable subgrade.

Phase III - Base material. This includes the hauling and spreading of base material over a prepared subgrade. After spreading and rolling, this base will be approximately 12" in depth.

Phase IV - This will include the placing of curb and gutter, sidewalks, driveways, and retaining walls.

Phase V - Seal coat on surface of flexible base.

Phase VI - Final hot mix asphaltic pavement and striping.

During the month of May the following work sequence will be attempted on the East side. Work on the West side will not be started until the entire East side is complete.

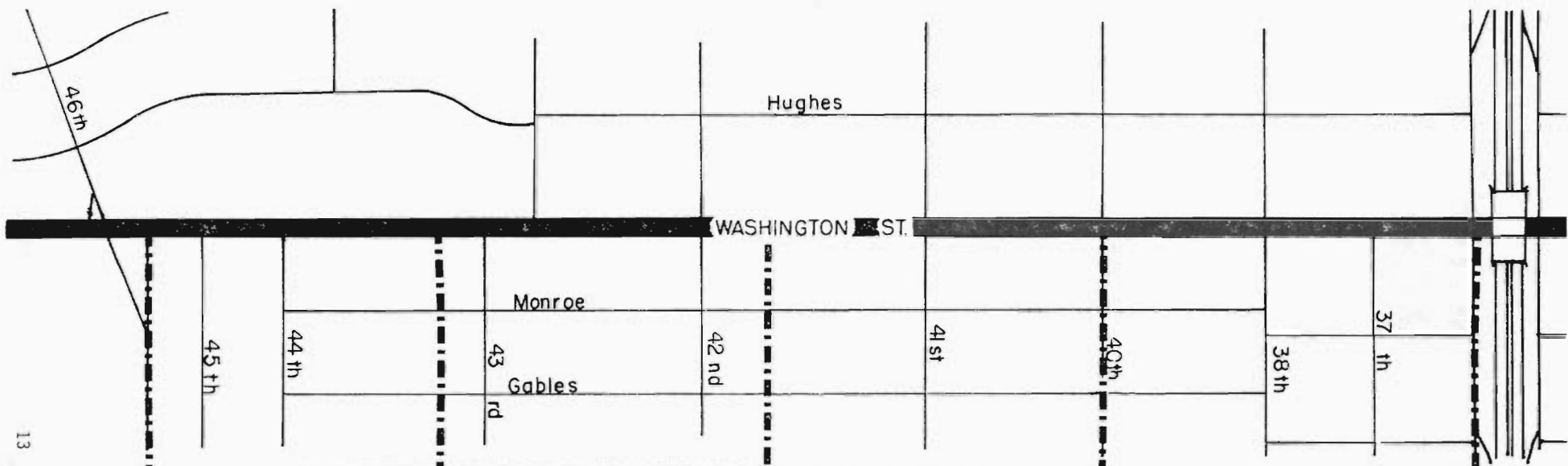
May 4 to May 8	Section 1 - Continue Phase IV
May 11 to May 15	Section 1 - Complete Phase IV
	Section 2 - Start Phase IV
May 18 to May 22	Section 1 - Start Phase V
	Section 2 - Continue Phase IV
	Section 3 - Start Phase IV
May 25 to May 29	Section 1 - Complete Phase V
	Section 2 - Complete Phase IV
	Section 3 - Continue Phase IV
	Section 4 - Start Phase IV

In order to keep streets open, we are only placing half of the gutters across the street intersections. This concrete must cure for approximately two weeks before the traffic can be routed over the concrete and the other half placed. This slows up the progress, but is necessary for good construction practices.

The sidewalks, driveways and retaining walls will follow the curb and gutter as close as practicable. Therefore, when the curb and gutter is complete, it will be only a short while before all other construction behind the curb and gutter is complete. This will allow the property owner to adapt to the new facility and will allow full use of driveway and sidewalk except for a very short period while the paving is being placed.

This schedule is only tentative and may need to be adjusted if weather dictates. So far the project has progressed very smoothly. We have had very few complaints. We feel that keeping you informed of the proposed construction phases has answered questions before they became problems. We know you have been inconvenienced but thank you for your patience and understanding.

If you have questions or comments, contact Mr. George Cannon, Supervising Resident Engineer; Mr. Everett Bryan, Project Engineer; or Mr. Bill Cain, Chief Inspector. Their office is located at 5th and Parker and their telephone number is 376-5253. The field office is located at 46th and Washington and the field office number is 374-4156.



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SECTION	④	③	②	①
MAY 4-8				CONTINUE PHASE IV
11-15			START PHASE IV	COMPLETE PHASE IV
18-22		START PHASE IV	CONTINUE PHASE IV	START PHASE V
25-29	START PHASE IV	CONTINUE PHASE IV	COMPLETE PHASE IV	COMPLETE PHASE V



THE....

# WASHINGTON STREET PROGRESS REPORT

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PREPARED BY: STATE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 4

June - 1981

This is the fourth report on the progress of the project to reconstruct South Washington Street. May was again a good month for construction and the Contractor progressed some faster than anticipated. All base material has been placed, shaped and rolled on the east side. The placing of the curb and gutter is complete on the east side and during the first week of June the remaining sidewalks, driveways and retaining walls should be complete. We are again including a map with this report for a quick look at what is anticipated during June.

As stated in the previous reports, the project will be broken into four separate sections:

Section 1 - is from IH 27 south approximately 1200' to 40th Avenue.

Section 2 - will be from 40th Avenue to approximately 250' north of 42nd Avenue.

Section 3 - will be from 250' north of 42nd Avenue south approximately 200' south of 43rd Avenue.

Section 4 - will be from approximately 200' south of 43rd Avenue south to the end of the project.

The work will also be performed in 6 phases.

Phase I - Clearing trees, rough grading, removal of curb and gutter, sidewalks, driveways, and excavation of excess material.

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Phase III - Base material. This includes the hauling and spreading of base material over a prepared subgrade. After spreading and rolling, this base will be approximately 12" in depth.

Phase IV - This will include the placing of curb and gutter, sidewalks, driveways, and retaining walls.

Phase V - Seal coat on surface of flexible base.

Phase VI - Final hot mix asphaltic pavement and striping.



During the month of June the following sequence of work is scheduled:

June 1 to June 5	Complete Phase IV in Sections 3 & 4. This will complete the concrete work on the east side.
June 8 to June 12	Complete Phase V on the entire east side. This will include a prime coat in Sections 3 & 4 and a seal coat on the entire east side.
June 15 to June 19	Complete Phase VI on the entire east side. This will include Hot Mix Asphaltic Concrete Pavement on the east side. The work will complete construction on the east side except for final striping.
June 22 to June 26	During this week Phase I may be started on the west side on Section I.

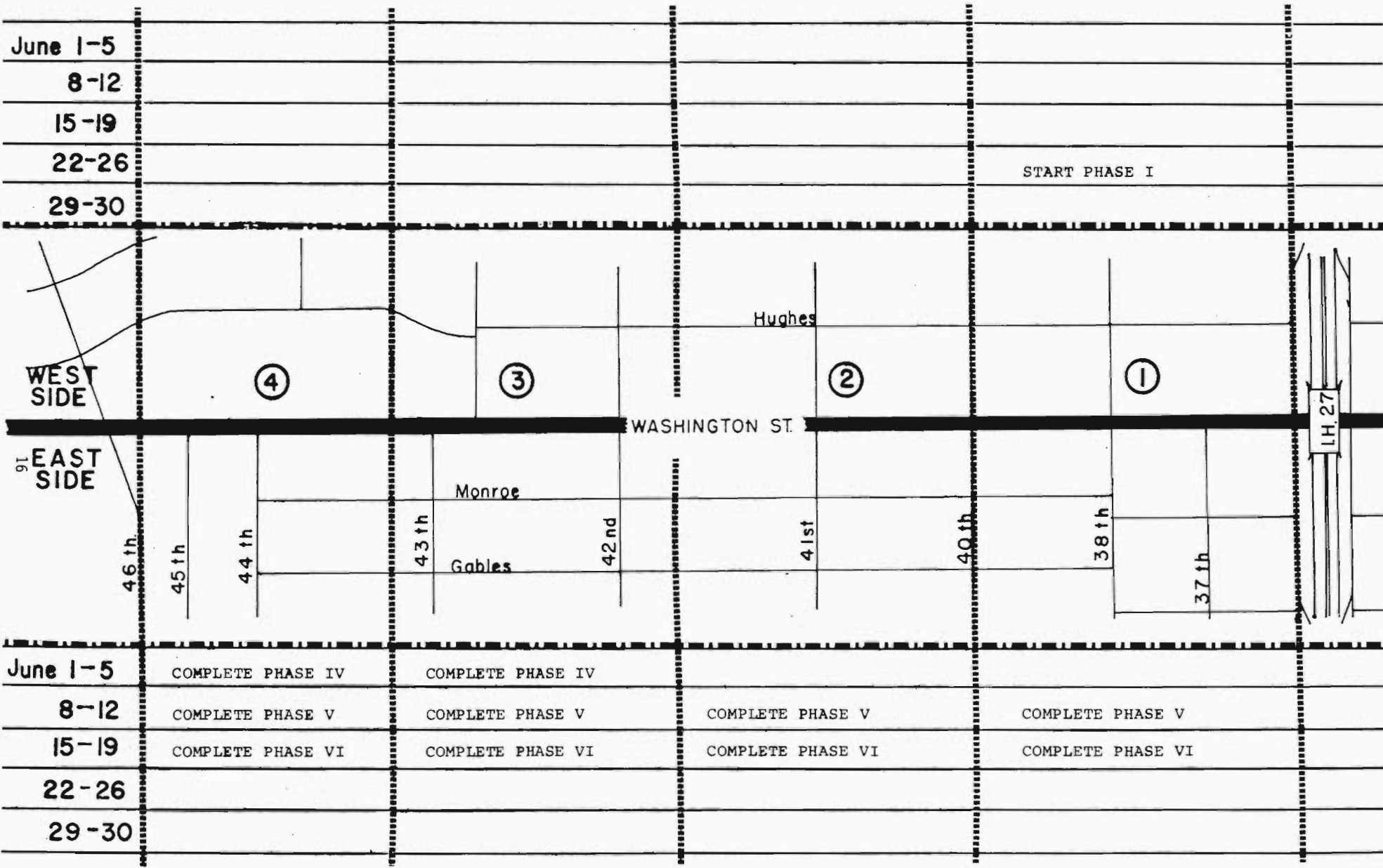
The Contractor will close down all his operations during the week of June 28 through July 4.

Schedule for widening the roadway between the north and south frontage roads at IH 27 is somewhat unsettled. This work will have to be co-ordinated with the new signal installation at these intersections. The delivery dates on signal equipment is uncertain and the new signals must be in place and operating before the existing signals are removed.

With the approaching completion of the east side, we would like to thank the east side residents for your patience and understanding during this phase of construction. We have noticed that many of you now have your yards back in shape and can now settle back from this experience. We hope that with the new widened street your access will be greatly improved. We know that when completely finished the new facility will handle the anticipated traffic in a much improved manner.

Now.....you people on the west side will be the subject of most of the future construction progress reports. Having watched the progress on the east side will help you understand the sequence of work and time periods for each segment of construction.

As work progresses on the west side, if you have questions or comments, contact Mr. George Cannon, Supervising Resident Engineer; Mr. Everett Bryan, Project Engineer; or Mr. Bill Cain, Chief Inspector. Their office is located at 5th and Parker and their telephone number is 376-5253. The field office is located at 46th and Washington and the field office number is 374-4156.



June 1-5  
 8-12  
 15-19  
 22-26  
 29-30

START PHASE I

WEST SIDE

④

③

②

①

<sup>91</sup> EAST SIDE

WASHINGTON ST.

L.H. 27

46th

45th

44th

43th

Monroe

42nd

Gables

41st

40th

38th

37th

June 1-5

COMPLETE PHASE IV

COMPLETE PHASE IV

8-12

COMPLETE PHASE V

COMPLETE PHASE V

COMPLETE PHASE V

COMPLETE PHASE V

15-19

COMPLETE PHASE VI

COMPLETE PHASE VI

COMPLETE PHASE VI

COMPLETE PHASE VI

22-26

29-30