



## Idaho TD

## Public Engagement

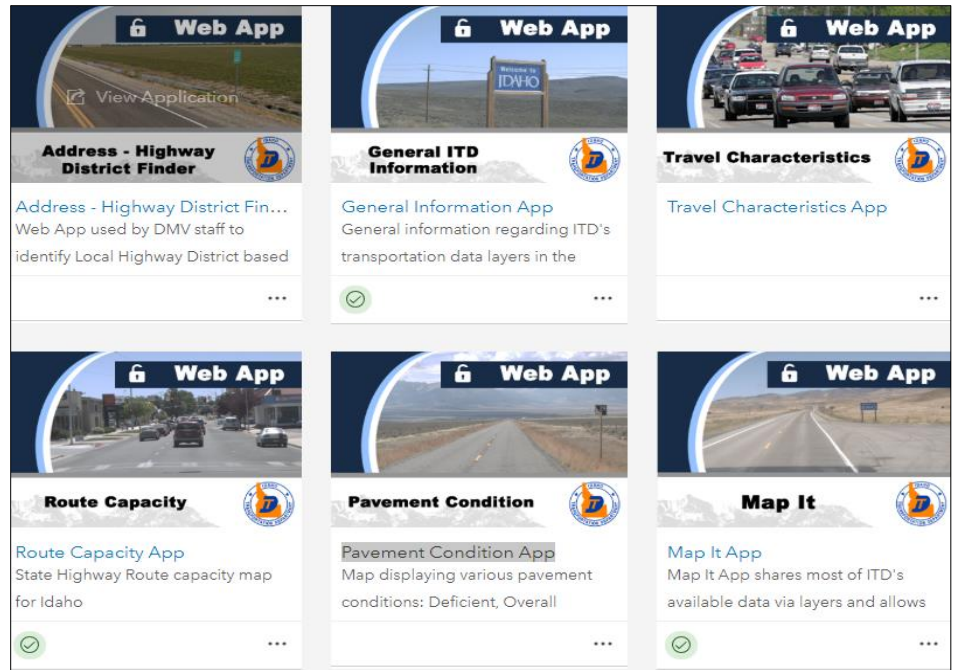
The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) used a series of interactive web-based applications known as Story Maps to support a robust public involvement program.

### Demand for Public Involvement

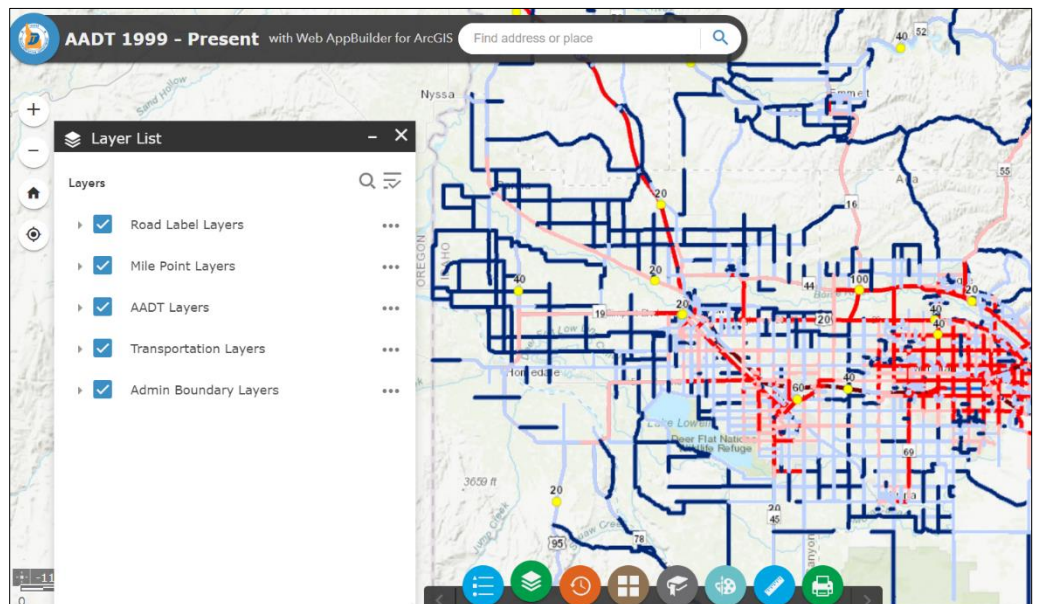
Idaho is experiencing substantial growth in population. This, in turn, is placing new pressure on the State's transportation systems, including infrastructure and safety. As the need for expanded transportation options increases, so does the potential impact of these projects on communities and stakeholders. Because of this, the need for public involvement in transportation operation, safety, and planning in Idaho is at an all-time high.<sup>1</sup>

### Story Maps

To address this need, ITD introduced Story Maps<sup>2</sup>, an interactive tool to support public involvement efforts. Story Maps allow ITD to combine project maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content to communicate with stakeholders and the public about project planning activities. It was developed by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) and is hosted in ArcGIS online, which is an online geographic information system (GIS) tool. A key advantage of these online GIS tools is that the users do not need to have any GIS or coding experience.



Gallery of ITD Story Maps.



Example Story Map App.

## Benefits

ITD uses Story Maps for long-range, corridor, and modal project outreach efforts. These maps can display safety issues along a corridor, which allows end users to understand these issues in relation with other transportation needs in a specific corridor. Additionally, Story Maps app has the following benefits:

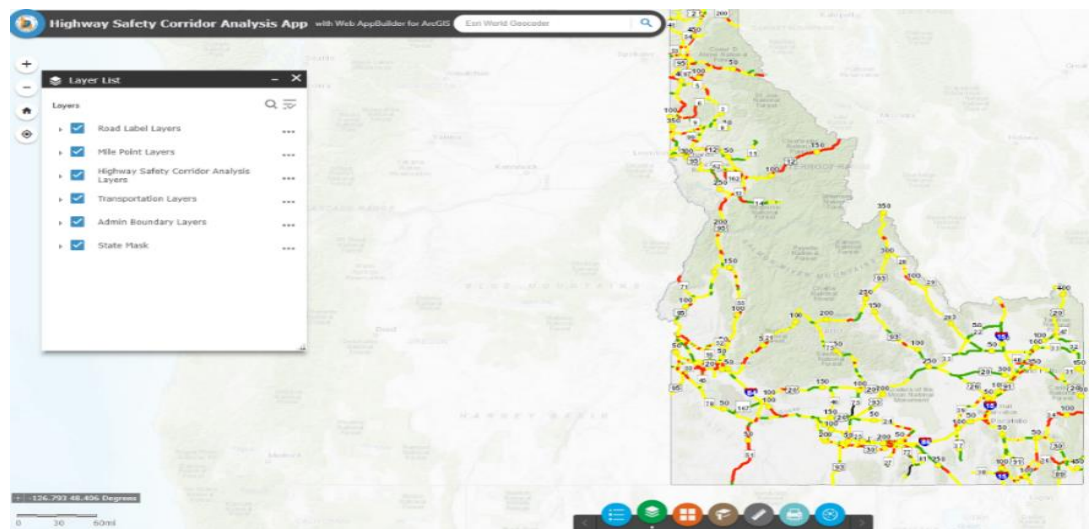
- **Helps people understand the whole concept.** Maps tell a story of a place, issue, event, trend, or pattern in a geographic context, which can help people understand the big picture.
- **Enables people to comment right on the document or map.** The interactive maps allow people to add comments directly on the map, streamlining the public review process.
- **Reaches people outside traditional public meetings.** By making project information available online, Story Maps enable ITD to reach people who might otherwise not be able to attend a public meeting.

## Story Maps in Action

ITD created a series of interactive web-based applications using Story Maps to support data visualization. For example, the Highway Safety Corridor Analysis app incorporated several drop-down panels and hovering and zooming options. The app allowed users to weigh in on proposed safety improvements.

Other ITD web-based Story Map apps focused on the following:

- Crashes
- Transportation investments
- Route capacity
- Roadway characteristics
- Travel characteristics
- Pavement condition
- Intelligent transportation system devices
- Statewide systems
- Extra-length routes
- Construction locations
- Cumulative annual average daily traffic



Highway Safety Corridor Analysis App.

## Status

During the 2017 Planner's Summit, it was determined that making work processes and initiatives easily accessible through ESRI Story Maps would allow ITD to best serve its staff and citizens, and therefore ITD would include in its Planning Network (IPLAN). ITD has been working with modal/district staff to update the corridor planning process using Story Maps as a basis to develop a new *Corridor Planning Guidebook*.

## Contact Information

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## References

<sup>1</sup> Idaho Transportation Department. *ITD Guide to Public Involvement for Programs, Planning and Projects*.

<https://apps.itd.idaho.gov/apps/manuals/PublicInvolve/PublicInvolve.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Idaho Transportation Department. *Story Maps*. [https://iahd.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Story-Maps\\_ESRI.pdf](https://iahd.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Story-Maps_ESRI.pdf).