

**PROGRAM TITLE: NAVIGATING OUR ROADWAZE**  
**ISSUE AREA: GOVERNMENT FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION & TECHNOLOGY**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**OVERVIEW:** San Joaquin County Public Works Department uses innovative systems, GIS and Waze, to benefit the safety and convenience of motorists.

**CHALLENGE:** The County lacked a way to provide quick and accurate information to the public about county road activity that could impact citizens navigating our roads. Whether the activity was planned or unplanned, we needed a tool to help the traveling citizens, as well as first-responders, better prepare for, and respond to these situations. The winter storms of 2016/17 prompted us to find a way to get information out to the public to inform them of roadway issues. This was the genesis of the San Joaquin County Roadway Incident Notification Program.

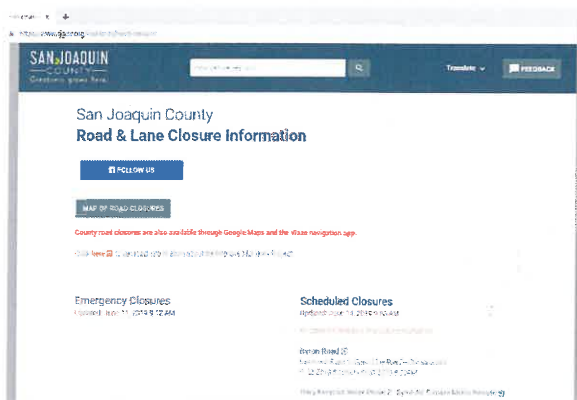
**The 2016/17 winter storms brought about rainfall that had not been realized statewide in over 20 years!** San Joaquin County received rainfall totals that exceeded any reasonable rural roadside drainage standards and resulted in significant localized flooding. At one point, 17 county roadways were closed due to flooding and/or roadway obstructions. The Public Works Department had a long-standing, efficient practice of notifying emergency responders of road closures to minimize delay in reaching emergency incidents, but motorists were not in that communication loop. They were often unaware of an unscheduled road closure and would be forced to follow on-site detours, resulting in delays reaching their destination. The Department saw this impact

on our constituents and proactively looked for solutions to ease this burden. The challenge faced by County motorists became an opportunity for the Public Works Department! **How do we timely notify the traveling public of traffic impediments affecting their commute?**



**INNOVATIVE SOLUTION:** The creation of the Roadway Incident Notification Program allowed us to speed up the process of informing drivers of numerous hazards and safer alternative routes. Our webpage includes an interactive map that can visually display impacted routes so motorists can better navigate the county roadways. To further enhance our communications, we reached out to Waze and joined its Connected Citizens Partnership, which allowed us to provide real-time guidance to citizens. With an investment of less than \$1,000 in staff time, we were able to bring this program to life. It is extremely reliable, requires little staff time to maintain and is easy for citizens to use. The Roadway Incident Notification Program has several features: website, mobile access, and social media usage.

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To access the website, users can search “road closures in San Joaquin County” and will be directed to our webpage. On the webpage, there are links to social media, interactive maps, as well as a notation that San Joaquin County Public Works uses Waze and Google Maps to update roadway impediments. The usability of the webpage and the benefit of Waze and Google Maps is clean and easy to navigate. Traveling motorists are able to benefit from the most up-to-date information about road closures and traffic incidents. Relevant information such as road name, location, closure reason, and projected reopening time can be accessed by residents from any desktop or mobile device with an internet connection.

**REPLICABILITY & RESULTS:** By harnessing GIS and more importantly, partnering with Waze, any county within the state can replicate what we have achieved. The positive impact on motorists was immediate! The road closure notification website received tremendous acclaim. Our service level has been improved by the Roadway Incident Notification Program because over the last 2.5 years, the number of citizens that are aware of county roadway

impediments has significantly increased. Prior to the implementation of the Roadway Incident Notification Program, we would receive less than 500 calls a year from citizens asking about county activities affecting commute and travel times. After we launched the Roadway Incident Notification Program, of just the website, we have seen a significant increase in the number of citizens that access roadway information. Since its launch, the website has received over 25,000 unique visits. The road closure map on our website has added another 17,000 views. That is significantly more than the 1,250 citizens we project we would have engaged with before via a call to our Department. With the addition of the Waze collaboration, **the Department’s business process has improved because we now have the ability to obtain data from Waze, such as trends of traffic congestion, to deploy our staff to investigate the cause and mitigate traffic congestion.** As a public agency, we make it our priority to provide timely information about activities that can impact safe travel on county roadways. **The San Joaquin County Roadway Incident Notification Program is just one simple, yet powerful, way local government can positively improve the quality of life for its constituency!**

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