



ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Inside Lane

Summer 2018

ALDOT Megaproject Transforming I-59/20

A monumental ALDOT project is investing approximately \$750 million into the future of I-65 and I-59/20.

After over 40 years of service life, Birmingham's I-65 and I-59/20 through the Central Business District had not only begun to show its age, but had required significant amounts of deck repairs and bridge rail repairs due to deterioration and fatigue of the structure. The traffic volumes have far exceeded the designed capacity which has created lane changing conflicts, vehicle crashes, congestion and delays. These conditions are not only an annoyance to the traveling public, but also cause economic loss for commerce, resulting in the local community naming the I-65 interchange with I-59/20 Malfunction Junction.

What was originally designed to accommodate 80,000 vehicles per day now carries 160,000. An additional 130,000 vehicles per day on I-65 coupled with a high percentage of truck traffic has made matters worse. This is even with construction of additional lanes in the median along I-65 in

1988 and bridge widening and additional lanes through the I-59/20 and I-65 Route Interchange in 2004.

Prior to work beginning, ALDOT studied several options. One was a proposed 2.5-mile corridor that would have rerouted I-59/20 north of its current location and connected to I-65 with a redesigned interchange. However, this path would have required construction of an elevated 16-lane interstate through the local neighborhoods, resulting in excessive cost and taken an estimated 20 years to complete.

A similar, but longer route was also considered. Studies showed that this route would have required the demolition of nearly all the businesses along the SR-378 (Finley Boulevard Corridor), at a higher cost to complete than the first option.

It was even suggested ALDOT examine tunneling the interstate under its current location. This would have required the relocation of numerous major utility lines. It was also determined the interstate would be located underneath



numerous adjoining buildings, weakening their structural integrity. It would be lower than the water table, and future capacity would be extremely difficult.

ALDOT's next concept centered on completely rebuilding the existing interstates or simply re-decking the existing structure. After consultation with the City of Birmingham and Jefferson County, it became clear that re-decking would be insufficient to address the design deficiencies that currently exist.

Instead, it was determined that rebuilding was the preferred option.

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Inside Lane seeks to inform, honor employees



John Cooper
Transportation Director

I hope you will enjoy reading this first edition of *Inside Lane*, ALDOT's revived newsletter.

It's been almost 10 years since the old newsletter, *Expressway*, was last published. You will notice significant differences beyond the newsletter's new name, *Inside Lane*. This new format will feature ALDOT-related news stories designed to give you the inside track on our largest projects and initiatives, new and evolving programs, and recurring segments on safety, funding and legislative updates. It also will feature Region news (with one

Region being spotlighted on a revolving basis), and employee recognition, news and features.

Another difference is that *Inside Lane* is being mailed directly to your home address rather than distributed at workplaces. That's because we are making it a priority for you to receive this newsletter when you can read it in the comfort and relaxation of your home, and we hope you will share it with your family. We hope this approach makes you better informed about ALDOT's operations, how we are working hard to make ends meet on a very tight budget, and how employees like you make it possible.

I am very thankful for you and the work done by you and your co-workers. In January 2011, when I was appointed Transportation Director, ALDOT had 4,821

employees. Today, we have 4,315 employees, and we are truly doing more with less. I am thankful that we have been able to achieve this reduction through retirements rather than layoffs, and we have been working hard to hold the line on our numbers in the Regions. I am more convinced than ever that we have a great workforce, and I appreciate you and your contributions.

It has been said that "we are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." That's true with your specific job within ALDOT, and it will guide us as we produce this revived ALDOT newsletter. We aim to continually improve, and we invite your input individually and through your Bureau or Region.

Tell Us What You Think

Throughout much of ALDOT's history, an employee newsletter has been a common and welcome practice. The ALDOT newsletter is back for the first time since 2009. The revived newsletter provides ALDOT a strategic way to communicate.

Media & Community Relations, along with input from the Region public information officers and others throughout ALDOT, will be publishing *Inside Lane* three times per year. It will be mailed to active employees, with an option for e-distribution to retirees and ALDOT stakeholders.

We welcome your feedback about this first edition of *Inside Lane*, as well as your suggestions and story ideas. [Send your input or ideas to Haley Ansley at ansleyh@dot.state.al.us.](mailto:ansleyh@dot.state.al.us)



ALDOT Newsletters
Through the Years

Mobile River Bridge and Bayway Project Comes to Life

The Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project will bring relief to one of the state's most congested highways.

The proposed project consists of improvements to increase the capacity on I-10 by constructing a new six-lane cable-stayed bridge and the complete replacement of the existing four-lane bridges across Mobile Bay (the Bayway) with eight-lane bridges built to withstand a 100-year storm event.

ALDOT is adopting an innovative approach to financing and project delivery in the form of a Public Private Partnership (P3). Long relied upon as an alternative delivery mechanism on projects throughout the world, P3s are increasingly shown to be an effective delivery mechanism for large-scale projects in the United States. Using a P3 with a Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Maintain (DBFOM) model, a private developer (concessionaire) will design, build, finance, operate and maintain the project and assume full traffic and revenue risk for a period of 55 years (five years of construction and 50 years of operations). The project will be ALDOT's first P3 and tolled route. ALDOT will maintain full ownership of I-10 at all times.

Funding

As an approximately \$2 billion project, it is necessary that funding come from a multitude of sources, both public and private. Private equity is the first piece of the puzzle, in which the concessionaire will invest a considerable amount of funding into the project. Similarly, on the public side, it is anticipated that ALDOT will provide some level of public subsidy. The amount and timing of the subsidy will not be known until after a concessionaire is selected. Public and private debt

is another component of the overall funding. The selected concessionaire will assume responsibility for securing debt financing for the project, which may be in the form of commercial bank loans, private placement debt, tax-exempt private activity bonds, or taxable bonds. A TIFIA loan will be issued through the United States Department of Transportation, which will cover approximately 33 percent of eligible costs, and Federal grants are being actively sought. Toll revenues will serve as the primary payback mechanism to help repay the necessary long-term debt incurred.

Procurement and NEPA

Working with the Federal Highway Administration, ALDOT is using a two-step competitive procurement process entailing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Request for Proposals (RFP).

ALDOT has enlisted a team of technical, financial, and legal advisors to support both the P3 procurement and the National Environmental Policy Act processes. ALDOT adopted an industry participative approach to procurement with industry meetings throughout process. One such meeting, an Industry Forum, was attended by more than 300 professionals and took place in August 2017. ALDOT garnered valuable first-person input from participating equity firms, contractors and engineering firms regarding risk allocation, roles and expectations to help facilitate project advancement, including concept refinements, extensive geotechnical investigations, a Load Test Program, advance right-of-way purchases and utility coordination. ALDOT then solicited qualifications from all interested teams last fall, and in February

2018, three teams were shortlisted based on their financial and technical credentials and history of delivering projects of similar magnitude and scope. The current RFP phase will culminate with the selection of a preferred bidder in mid-2019.

The environmental and procurement paths will converge with the concurrent issuance of the Record of Decision from the FHWA and the final RFP at the end of 2018. In early 2019, ALDOT will review, evaluate and select a Best Value Proposal. After selection of the Best Value Proposal, there will be a Commercial and Financial Close period with an anticipated start of construction in late 2019.

Public Involvement

This much-needed project will increase capacity on I-10, provide

a direct interstate route for hazardous material transport, minimize adverse impacts to the maritime industry, enhance access to major industrial and freight destinations in the Mobile area, and further facilitate economic growth. As such, it is of much interest to the residents of Mobile and Baldwin Counties.

ALDOT has worked to establish a trusted and transparent relationship with community members and media.

ALDOT's project team is working diligently to deliver this project, which will save motorists time, money and frustration. The final project will be a beautiful bridge that preserves and protects the Mobile Bay so future generations can enjoy the view and natural beauty from the bridge.

Follow the project's progress online at mobileriverbridge.com.

Funding Analysis: New Capacity Falling Behind

Pinched by rising costs and stagnant funding, the share of resources ALDOT can devote to adding capacity to the state highway system is shrinking.

Chief Engineer Don Arkle said maintaining existing infrastructure takes precedence over constructing additional lanes or new roads and bridges to reduce congestion.

According to the 2040 Statewide Transportation Plan, a planning document making projections based on 2015 data, ALDOT will have to spend an estimated \$7.8 billion on capacity improvements over the 25 years covered by the plan just to keep Alabama's highway system at the same level of congestion it had in 2010.

That's more than twice what ALDOT is on track to spend on capacity improvements in that time.

Only about a tenth of ALDOT's \$1.27 billion budget is set aside for capacity projects, while more than half of the budget is dedicated to maintenance, resurfacing and bridge replacement.

"Because system preservation—keeping our roads in good shape—is our number one priority, we've had to spend more money doing that and less doing capacity-type work," Arkle said. "We're slowly eroding that capacity number to where we're going to be a maintenance-only operation, unless we get additional funding.

"If we're not careful, there will come a point in time when we can't do any kind of capacity work, and we may find ourselves where we can't even maintain what we've got. So it's important to be as fiscally responsible as we can and make our dollars stretch as far as we can stretch them."

Arkle said ALDOT's funding has remained relatively flat since about 2005.

"It's been little increases here, little decreases there, but basically level funding," he said.

ALDOT's budget is made up of about 60 percent federal funding and 40 percent state funding.

The state gasoline tax, the primary source of state funding, was last

increased in 1992, and the federal gasoline tax was last increased in 1993.

"Even though we used to get revenue increases as people drove more or more people drove, that's been impacted by cars getting more miles to the gallon, so that's caused it to level off," Arkle said.

Meanwhile, construction costs have risen "about four times since the last tax increase," drastically reducing ALDOT's purchasing power, Arkle said.

About \$190 million in federal funding, or 15 percent of the total budget, is sub-allocated to metropolitan planning organizations and others. Another \$90 million in state funding, about seven percent of the budget, is diverted to other state agencies, including \$35 million to the Administrative Office of Courts and \$28.5 million to the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency.

Roughly \$1 billion remains to address the needs of the state's transportation system, which includes about 1,000 miles of interstate highways, more than 10,000 miles of non-interstate routes, and 5,785 bridges.

ALDOT resurfaces on a 12-year cycle, repaving about 80 miles of interstate and 850 miles of state routes each year, and replaces about

a dozen bridges each year. But Arkle said a greater number of bridges will need replacing in the coming years.

"Those bridges constructed during the massive new build program throughout the state that included the interstates (during the '60s, '70s and '80s) are going to be aging out," Arkle said. "We suspect we're going to have to be replacing a lot more of those."

In the case of the ongoing multi-phase project to replace and improve the I-20/59 bridges through Birmingham's Central Business District, ALDOT is borrowing against future funding to meet an immediate need that exceeds its funding capability. The project's estimated final price tag of \$750 million is equal to ALDOT's capacity funds for five to six years combined or all bridge replacement funds for a decade.

Debt service costs on the CBD project along with the Alabama Transportation Rehabilitation and Improvement Program, a \$1.2 billion public works program, are nearly \$114 million annually.

Those debts eat into the funds available for future projects—funds that now buy less when more is needed.

ARTBA Classes are Investment in Safety Culture

ALDOT, with the help of the American Road and Transportation Builders Association, began providing a Safety Awareness Class for employees this summer. This is an effort to protect our workers and promote safety awareness. It is designed for employees with duties that require them to work in or around live traffic or within any highway right-of-way and any employee with duties that require the use of, or work near, any power equipment. ARTBA trainers cover a wide range of topics including run-overs and back-overs, traffic control, fall protection and blind spots with a truck demonstration.



ARTBA training classes in Tuscaloosa at a truck demonstration.



ARTBA classes in session in Tuscaloosa in May 2018.



ASAP on the Road for Motorist Safety, Minimizing Traffic Congestion



Busy lives interrupted by stopped traffic on the road can lead to more than frustration. So, for the safety of motorists and to keep traffic flowing on interstates, ALDOT recently brought its Alabama Service and Assistance Patrol (ASAP) program to Tuscaloosa and Montgomery.

The primary responsibility of ASAP is to minimize interstate traffic congestion created by incidents such as crashes, disabled vehicles, work zones, adverse weather events and planned special events. For motorists stranded by these events, ASAP drivers assist motorists with getting to a safe location off the road. In 2016 in Alabama, 13 percent of all interstate highway deaths were people standing or walking in the roadway or on the shoulder.

For the safety of ASAP operators, changes were made in 2018 to the “Move Over” law to require drivers to move over a lane or slow down when passing an ASAP vehicle.

ASAP is on the scene to help when there are vehicle crashes, icy roads or when stalled vehicles, debris or some other obstruction prevents the normal flow of traffic on the interstate. For every seven minutes a lane is blocked, we are subject to a mile of backup. Once the lane is cleared, it takes an average of four minutes per mile to return to normal speeds.

The ASAP program started in Birmingham in 1997 and was later introduced in Mobile. ASAP operators drive along the interstates near Birmingham, Mobile, Tuscaloosa and Montgomery looking for stranded motorists, stalled vehicles and other issues that could create traffic congestion or

safety issues. ASAP vehicles are pick-up trucks with ASAP and ALDOT logos on the doors and emergency lights along the top of the truck. ASAP trucks are outfitted with traffic cones, push bumpers and other special equipment. Based on the type of issue, ASAP may provide services or call for assistance.

ASAP Drivers Trained to Serve

ASAP drivers complete a National Traffic Incident Management Responder Program and other training and certification programs in preparation for their work. For greater efficiency and effectiveness in locating and safely clearing disruptions to restore traffic flow, ASAP drivers work with Regional ALDOT Traffic Management Center, law enforcement and other emergency responders.

ASAP is not a vehicle towing service, but can offer services to help motorists get to a safe place off the roadside. That service sometimes includes providing water for an overheated vehicle or a small amount of fuel, changing a flat tire or giving a battery jump start.

Services provided by ALDOT are at no cost to the motorist. Studies nationwide continue to illustrate a positive return on investment, with an average of 24:1 for freeway service patrol programs. Safety, economic, environmental and other benefits result from these programs.

Stranded motorists can reach ASAP during operating hours by calling the nearest ALDOT Traffic Management Center.



The Gee's Bend Ferry in Wilcox County will soon become the first all-electric passenger ferry in the United States, and the second in the world.



ALDOT's Gee's Bend Ferry Going Green

The historic Gee's Bend Ferry is getting a 21st century makeover. ALDOT has been awarded a \$1.09 million grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to convert the diesel-powered work boat into a battery-powered electric vessel. It is set to become the first all-electric ferry in the United States, and only the second in the world.

The grant awarded to ALDOT is part of the National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program, which is the funding mechanism for the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA). The objective of this program is to help fund projects that would achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions in terms of tons of pollution produced and exposure.

HMS Ferries operates the 24-vehicle/149-passenger ferry built in 2004 by Bonner Yacht Works for ALDOT. It makes five round-trips daily, 362 days a year across the Alabama River between Gee's Bend and Camden. It is estimated that the vessel's four diesel engines run up to 2,700 hours annually. The conversion from diesel to electric will not only eliminate the ferry's fuel emissions, reducing air pollution, it will also reduce ALDOT's operating expenses by an estimated 50 percent.

The switch to electric power is the latest development in the colorful and sometimes controversial history of the Gee's Bend Ferry over the decades.

According to the online Encyclopedia of Alabama, the original ferry ran on cables, providing a vital connection during the early and mid-20th century between Camden, the county seat, and the small community of Gee's Bend, whose residents were mostly descendants of slaves.

But in 1962, during the Civil Rights Movement, the ferry was closed by local officials in an effort to prevent residents of Gee's Bend from reaching Camden to register to vote. Without the ferry, Gee's Bend residents traveled 80 miles round-trip to get to the county seat, compared to a 15-minute boat ride.

More than 40 years passed before the ferry service was reinstated, in 2006.

During the ferry's absence, Gee's Bend became renowned for the colorful quilts produced by women in the community. Since its return, the ferry itself has become a tourist attraction, drawing

travelers and tourists from across the globe.

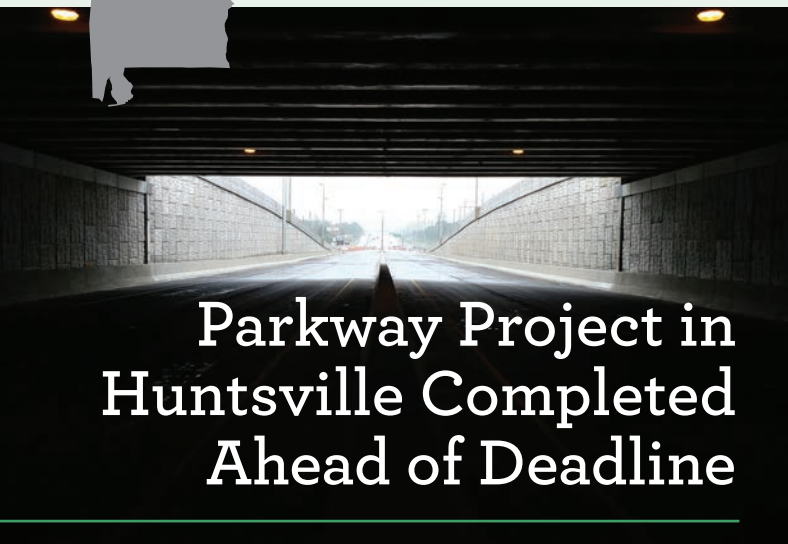
The Marissa Mae Nicole, one of two vessels in ALDOT's Mobile Bay Ferry service, is covering the Gee's Bend route while that ferry is being retrofitted with its new electric power system. The conversion is currently ongoing, with the newly outfitted, all-electric ferry expected to be back in service at Gee's Bend in late 2018.

Transportation Director John Cooper said it is a feather in the state's cap to be the first in the nation with this type of conversion.

"It is exciting that the state of Alabama will lead the nation with the use of this clean technology," Cooper said. "This is an opportunity for ALDOT to showcase innovations, while maintaining this important passenger-ferry service for the people of Wilcox County."



North Region News



Parkway Project in Huntsville Completed Ahead of Deadline

A \$53.9 million project for overpasses and other improvements on South Memorial Parkway in Huntsville is complete nearly a year ahead of schedule.

The project to construct two-lane frontage roads and a four-lane mainline with two overpasses on 1.5 miles of the heavily traveled US-231/SR-53 corridor through south Huntsville eliminates a bottleneck by connecting existing segments of expressway.

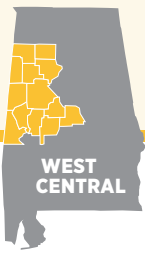
Project Manager Wanda Brooks noted that motorists will be able to travel nearly 10 miles between south Huntsville to north

Huntsville without stopping. About 70,000 vehicles pass through the area daily.

"It will be a blessing to a lot of people," Brooks said.

Brooks said her intention was to retire at age 62, when she reached 30 years of service, but she wanted to see this project through.

The project, part of a multi-project funding agreement between ALDOT and the City of Huntsville, is perhaps the largest in North Alabama since the construction of I-565 in the early 1990s, Brooks said.



Traffic Management Center to Improve Travel Experience

Eighteen high-definition monitors line the wall inside a building on the campus of the University of Alabama where local officials can watch and discuss traffic while operators gather information from their computers.

It's just one more way the West Central Region is trying to improve the public's traveling experience.

ALDOT partnered with the University of Alabama and the City of Tuscaloosa last year to create a Regional Traffic Management Center (RTMC) that monitors and manages traffic.

The RTMC is quickly working to move into the next step of actively managing traffic signals to fit varying conditions as Tuscaloosa is the fastest growing of the top five largest cities in the state with a growth of 10.9 percent since the 2010 census.

The RTMC acts as the main information hub for local organizations whose goal is to watch for crashes, construction or anything that could potentially delay traffic. Operators staff the



center 24/7, gathering data from cameras, wireless devices and other roadway monitoring tools to improve traffic flow. That data is then disseminated over ALGOtraffic.com, roadway signs and social media while operators coordinate with agencies.

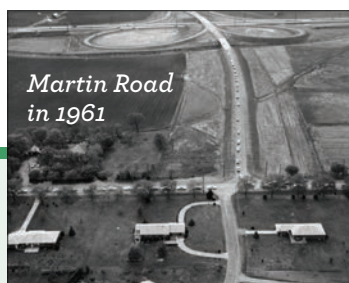
The center is also designed to handle major events, such as football traffic and concerts, and equipped to manage weather operations with more than 60 cameras distributed throughout Tuscaloosa. ALDOT also plans to install additional cameras throughout the region by the end of 2018.

A 2006 study by Florida International University found that RTMCs reduced fatalities by 10

percent, decreased crashes by 2.8 percent and improved travel time.

ALDOT and the University of Alabama have already upgraded 85 traffic signals in Tuscaloosa with new equipment and timing schedules. This resulted in improved travel times and intersection efficiency.

"I'm proud of everyone coming together to form the RTMC," said Nick Crane, ALDOT Region TSM&O Administrator. "The collaborative culture that exists is special. We've already accomplished several goals and hope to improve safety and mobility on our roadways for many years to come."



Martin Road in 1961



The project also included major improvements on Martin Road, a city street that is a key route to Redstone Arsenal.

Construction began in December 2015, with a deadline for completion of June 1, 2019. Reed Contracting and Miller and Miller, the joint venture contractors on the project, stand to receive a total of \$5 million in incentives for early completion.

Jordan Fleming, the transportation manager over the project, said

early completion will mean savings on costs to motorists as well as ALDOT.

"The credit for this accomplishment goes to our inspection staff and eager contractors working in a partnership with ALDOT," Fleming said.

Fleming said timely utility relocations within limited right-of-way at the outset were crucial to the project's long-term success.



Gov. Kay Ivey with some of the project team at the ribbon cutting in Huntsville. Front Row: Willie Wade, Gov. Ivey and Wanda Brooks. Back Row: Norris Johnson, Ron Parks, Kenny Barnett and Shawn Williams. Not pictured: Thomas Choron, Ronnie Ellis and Bobby Wilhite.



East Central Region News

I-65 Widening Underway in Alabaster

Construction began in mid-January to widen I-65 in Shelby County from four lanes to six lanes from approximately Exit 242 (commonly known as the Tank Farms Exit) to just south of Exit 238 in Alabaster. “By expanding I-65 in Shelby County, we are not only meeting a long-overlooked need in our state, we are also signaling that economic development is central to my administration and that Alabama is open for business,” Gov. Kay Ivey said. By April, clearing and grubbing was completed and work had begun to widen the existing bridge over Peavine Creek and the railway tracks. The additional lanes are being added in the median with a barrier wall being constructed along the entire 4.2 miles of the project. The project includes multiple drainage extensions and new culverts, retaining walls and extensive erosion control measures. This project was part of the December 2017 bid letting. The contract was awarded to Dunn Construction Co. and Wiregrass Construction Co. in a joint venture for a low bid of \$67.49 million. The contract stipulates a July 31, 2020 completion deadline.



“By expanding I-65 in Shelby County, we are not only meeting a long-overlooked need in our state, we are also signaling that economic development is central to my administration and that Alabama is open for business.” –Gov. Kay Ivey



Southeast Region News

Major Projects Now in Progress

The Southeast Region is preparing to take bids on a major widening project in Dothan on Ross Clark Circle from Bauman Drive to US-231 North and US-84 from Belaire Drive to Pinetree Drive. The corridor will go from a four lane to a six-lane corridor with triple lefts onto US-84 West and US-231 North. The north end of the project near US-231 North will have two-way service roads. The project is expected to begin construction in early 2019.

In May a resurfacing project on I-85 from the East Boulevard interchange to the Taylor Road interchange began. As part of the resurfacing project on the

Interstate the I-85 north exit ramp at Eastern Boulevard will be extended for queuing traffic, the I-85 south exit ramp at Eastern Boulevard will have dual lefts and dual rights at the top of the ramp, and the I-85 south exit ramp to Taylor Road will be lengthened to Bell Road. Improvements to Eastern Boulevard from Woodmere Boulevard to Monticello Drive are also included in this project. With up to 55,000 vehicles traveling this corridor daily, changes are needed to move traffic more efficiently.

The Changes

- Continuing three lanes of traffic over interstate from Woodmere Boulevard to Monticello Drive
- Signalized entrance ramp to I-85 north and south ramp just north of Carmichael Road
- Dual rights onto I-85 north and south ramp just north of Carmichael Road
- Continuing three lanes across the interstate from Monticello Drive to Woodmere Boulevard
- Upgraded signals at Carmichael Road, interstate ramps, and Monticello Drive
- Installation of overhead sign bridges.

The project was awarded to Midsouth Paving Inc. of Birmingham, at a cost of \$16.4 million, and is expected to be complete by the summer of 2019.



In June 2016, during a public involvement meeting regarding the proposed interchange improvements at the George Wallace Tunnel on I-10, one woman approached ALDOT engineers to discuss a rumor she had heard regarding the potential for local cyclists to be able to bike the Bankhead Tunnel. The tunnel of course would have to be shut down for cyclists to navigate through it, as no multi-use paths exist in the tunnels.

The spontaneous conversation sparked an interest with Southwest region engineers and resulted in an innovative bicycle and pedestrian experience.

In July 2016, ALDOT began Bike and Ped the Bankhead, a summer event in which for a few hours on Saturdays, the Bankhead Tunnel is closed off to motorists. This allows bicyclists, joggers and walkers a unique and safe space to exercise while also developing relationships with others in the community.

The Bankhead Tunnel is one of two tunnels which were constructed in segments above water then sunk beneath the

Mobile River, cemented together and pumped dry. The Bankhead Tunnel opened to the public on Feb. 20, 1941. Prior to the tunnels, the public would have to take boats across the bay which required hefty tolls. The Bankhead Tunnel is 40 feet below the surface of the Mobile River. As motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians travel through the tunnel, they are getting a special opportunity to travel underground through one of Mobile's most historic and innovative structures.

Bike the Bankhead has proven to be successful as numerous bicyclists and pedestrians continue to participate. The event continues to foster a more personal connection between ALDOT and local community stakeholders as it has created opportunities for one-on-one interactions and conversation among workers and those who frequent the event. This event has been an excellent example of what can happen when State and locals work together to accomplish a goal for the improvement of our communities.

Bike and Ped the Bankhead: The Origin Story



A group of bicyclists exit the Bankhead Tunnel



Pedestrians travel through the Bankhead Tunnel during Bike & Ped the Bankhead

Continued from page 1

This solution addresses capacity issues, safety issues, design issues and the disruption to the traveling public. It would also eliminate the existing weaves that force drivers into making unsafe lane crossings in high traffic conditions. Also, rebuilding the route interchanges would better help commuters enter and exit the city.

ALDOT began work in September 2015 with this effective and efficient remedy. The entire project includes demolition and constructing 6,600 feet of elevated bridge structure, widening and raising of bridges on I-65 South, rebuilding route

interchanges between I-65 and I-59/20, and rebuilding the Red Mountain Expressway Interchange at I-59/20, as well as the 31st Street Interchange.

"This will be the largest amount of money ALDOT has ever spent at one place," said Transportation Director John Cooper. "And, it will be the largest amount of traffic we've ever dealt with."

Phase 1 of the project consisted of a series of bridge and roadway improvements along I-65, just south of the interchange. This work has been completed and cost approximately \$8.06 million.

Phase 2 included 14 new bridges, two bridge removals, seven bridge widenings with 16 retaining walls. Phase 2 also involves work items for grade, drain, base, pave, striping, signals and lighting. This work is now nearing completion and has cost approximately \$232.29 million.

Phase 3 will replace the Central District Bridges (CBD) with new segmental bridges. This will include replacing the structures just east at the Carraway Boulevard and Red Mountain Expressway Interchange (US-31) at a cost of just under \$475 million.

While many of the lane and ramp

closures have been done at night to minimize impact on traffic, this is all about to end. Beginning sometime this Fall, the I-59/20 bridges will be closed completely. Motorists will be encouraged to use I-459 as an alternate route to get around the city. Motorists will be able to use I-65 through Birmingham.

The contractor will have 14 months to demolish the existing I-59/20 bridges and build the new bridges.

Stay Safe on the Road with Drive Safe Alabama

Sixty percent of people killed in crashes on Alabama highways have something in common. They weren't wearing a seat belt when they crashed. Many of those people could have survived if they had taken a few extra seconds to buckle up.

Through its Drive Safe Alabama highway safety public information campaign, ALDOT makes the public aware of seat belt safety and other ways we can all stay safe on the road. Drive Safe Alabama was created out of the 2012 Alabama Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The plan details strategies that incorporate education, engineering, law enforcement and emergency medical services in an effort to reduce crash fatalities and serious injuries.

Drive Safe Alabama focuses on education and awareness programs to improve overall driver behavior and habits. Facebook, Twitter and the Drive Safe Alabama website (DriveSafeAlabama.org) are some of the digital ways that ALDOT communicates the safe driving message. Each day there are helpful reminders or crash data on the Drive Safe Alabama Facebook and Twitter pages to help drivers and their passengers to safely get where they are going.

What is the best thing to do if your car starts hydroplaning on wet pavement? By law, through which age must children wear the appropriate safety restraint when riding in a vehicle? You can test your knowledge of this and other driver safety information by taking the Driver Safety Quizzes in the Learning Center on DriveSafeAlabama.org. Make it a competition, and invite your teenagers and other family and friends to take the quizzes to see who is the real Safety Savant.

With motor vehicle crashes being the leading cause of death for people 15-19 years old, Drive Safe Alabama uses culturally relevant approaches to

reach that group. Safe driving ads for teens on SnapChat put important messages on the devices that often distract teen drivers. Visiting high schools with the Drive Safe Alabama DUI driving simulator gives teens a first-hand experience of how dangerous it is to drive under the influence of alcohol. Partnering with the Alabama High School Athletic Association allows ALDOT to display safe driving messages to the thousands attending and watching football, basketball, baseball and other state finals.

"While teenagers are a key group for Drive Safe Alabama to reach, Alabama crash data make it clear that all ages need to be reached when it comes to safe driving," said Allison Green, Drive Safe Alabama coordinator for ALDOT. "Someone is injured in a traffic crash every 11 minutes in Alabama."



2018 Session Sees Important Legislation Become Law

The 2018 Alabama legislative session was a very productive one for ALDOT. Three separate pieces of legislation were passed that will help the Department improve its ability to enrich lives in Alabama through excellence in transportation.

One bill, nicknamed "Fast Track," will allow projects up to \$250K to be advertised for one week on the ALDOT web site rather than the customary process, up to an aggregate of \$1M annually. While we do not anticipate utilizing this process very often, it gives the Department another tool in its tool box, with the ability to expedite a project of urgent need.

Another important piece of legislation that passed was an amendment to the "Move Over" law that requires drivers to safely move over or slow down, if possible, for any vehicle parked on a roadside and displaying flashing lights. Unfortunately, we know all too well that roadsides are some of the most dangerous areas of our state, and this law will help protect not only ALDOT employees, but also first responders and motorists who find themselves on the shoulder of a highway.

Speaking of tools in the tool box, another important tool was added this session that will benefit not just ALDOT, but also counties and municipalities across the state. The Alabama Transportation Infrastructure Bank was to fund road, bridge and mass transit capital projects. The Infrastructure Bank can provide loans to governmental entities for these types of projects. This session, the law governing the bank was amended to allow government entities to borrow from the Infrastructure Bank at ALDOT's AAA bond rating. For most local governments, this guarantee will result in a higher bond rating than the local government could otherwise obtain, thus reducing the local government's borrowing cost and giving them more bang for their buck.

With the general election on Nov. 6, the 2019 legislative session will see a plethora of new faces in a variety of new positions. However, no matter what changes the legislature experiences, ALDOT will continue with its mission to provide a safe, efficient, environmentally sound intermodal transportation system for all users, especially the taxpayers of Alabama.



Outstanding Employee Awards

ALDOT's Employee Recognition Program honors exceptional employees on a quarterly basis. This recognition is special because the nominations come from co-workers or supervisors, with input quite often from the traveling public. The Employee of the Quarter award recognizes sincerity and courtesy, behavior that goes above and beyond the call of duty, and the dedication it takes to be an exceptional employee.

The honor of Employee of the Quarter is only given to 20 employees every year. While ALDOT employees share similarities, the Employee of the Quarter award recipients embody qualities that make them stand out to those who nominate them.

Outstanding Employees of Winter Quarter 2017

Alesha Austin, *Transportation Technologist, Southwest Region*

Misti Chappell, *Administrative Support Assistant II, North Region*

Keith Daly, *Civil Engineer, Licensed, West Central Region*

Albert Tabb, *Transportation Maintenance Superintendent, Southeast Region*

Jessica Whiteard, *Administrative Support Assistant II, East Central Region*

Michele Sims, *Accounting Technician, Central Office*

Outstanding Employees of Spring Quarter 2018

Garry Banks, *District Administrator for Alex City, East Central Region*

Ben Chance, *Transportation Maintenance Manager II, Southeast Region*

Curtis Lowe, *District Administrator, Guntersville, North Region*

Erica Shoemack, *Transportation Worker, Southwest Region*

Monica Weaver, *Transportation Technologist, West Central Region*

Mel Hyde, *Transportation Administrator, Central Office*



Albert Tabb

State Personnel Honors Employee

The State Personnel Department annually honors the state's top employees. For the second consecutive year, an ALDOT employee was honored. Albert Tabb, Transportation Maintenance Superintendent, Southeast Region, received an Honorable Mention in SPD's Employee of the Year program. Tabb was recognized for his role in leading maintenance crews in their response to two ice events that impacted central Alabama.

Recognizing Outstanding Rest Areas and Welcome Centers

ALDOT operates 27 Rest Areas and Welcome Centers. These facilities are operated and maintained by hard-working and dedicated employees who have a knack for public service. These devoted men and women make sure everyone who stops at the facility feels welcome, safe and comfortable.

Each quarter, a Rest Area and Welcome Center is recognized by ALDOT at a ceremony held in Montgomery. The facilities are reviewed based on how the facility has been maintained throughout the quarter. Appearance, safety and cleanliness are top priorities. It is an honor to recognize the Rest Areas and Welcome Centers that stand out.

Outstanding Rest Area for the Winter Quarter 2017

US-331 Rest Area in Covington County

Outstanding Welcome Center for the Winter Quarter 2017

Ardmore Welcome Center on I-65 in Limestone County

Outstanding Rest Area for the Spring Quarter 2018

The Chilton County Rest Area on US-82

Outstanding Welcome Center for the Spring Quarter 2018

The Dekalb County Welcome Center on I-59



Accepting the Maintenance Excellence Outstanding Rest Area for the Winter 2017 Quarter for the US 331 Rest Area in Covington County are Sonny Cravey, Larry Turman, Jerry Fuller, John DeVaughn, David Hutcheson, Wayne Kersey and Mark Carter



Accepting the Maintenance Excellence Outstanding Welcome Center for the Winter 2017 Quarter for the Ardmore Welcome Center are Jesse Miller, Michael Cain and Allen Taylor



Accepting the Maintenance Excellence Outstanding Welcome Center for the Spring 2018 Quarter for the Dekalb County Welcome Center are Curtis Lowe, Robert Hall, Brian Schrader and Rodger Whitehead

*Note: The award for Outstanding Rest Area for Spring Quarter 2018 will be presented in August, and will be featured in the Fall edition of *Inside Lane*.

ALDOT Leadership Academy Up and Running

Former Deputy Director of Administration Lamar “Bubba” Woodham envisioned an ALDOT Leadership Academy during the final few years of his 43-year career.

Following Woodham’s vision, ALDOT’s Leadership Academy was developed to motivate participants to seek and acquire leadership attitudes, skills and tools that best fit each participant’s personal outlook and job situation.

Through this program, ALDOT seeks to build a base of high-level leaders who will shape the future of transportation policy, design, planning and implementation. ALDOT intends for the program to help leaders in their current roles and to equip them with skills that benefit their Bureaus or Regions, co-workers and communities in the future.

ALDOT held its inaugural Leadership Academy in 2017; three classes have now graduated. Each class is split into two three-day sessions.

Participants go through 17 training modules covering a variety of topics including the history of ALDOT, communication, character and ethics, supervisory transition, strategic planning, employee development and mentoring, and more. These modules are presented by current and former ALDOT leaders.

A total of 70 employees have graduated from the Academy so far, with another 25 set to attend this fall. Participants are nominated by their Bureaus or Regions and selected by the Administrative Bureau.



Spring 2017 Class

Nick Walker, *Bridge*

Zakiya Wright, *Compliance & Business Opportunities*

Keith Janes, *Computer Services*

Dudley Smith, *Construction*

Russell Kirkpatrick, *Construction*

Scott Rogers, *Design*

LaTasha Merchant, *Design*

Ben Yates, *Maintenance*

Matt Revell, *Materials & Tests*

Josh Phillips, *Media & Community Relations*

Donald Lovelace, *Design*

Matt Johnson, *North Region, Guntersville Area*

Clint Baker, *North Region, Tuscumbia Area*

Roddy Mitchell, *East Central, Birmingham Area*

Calvin Cook, *East Central, Alex City Area*

James Kyzar, *West Central Region, Fayette Area*

Leslie Nicholson, *West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area*

Kevin Williamson, *West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area*

LaTara Burton, *West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area*

Davey Lyon, *Southeast Region, Montgomery Area*

Matt Wilson, *Southeast Region, Troy Area*

Vincent Beebe, *Southwest Region, Mobile Area*

Mike Burroughs, *Southwest Region, Grove Hill Area*

Fall 2017 Class

Hilary Gilbert, *Bridge*

John Huffman, *Compliance & Business Opportunities*

Joseph Dean, *Computer Services*

Scott Bell, *Computer Services*

Hunter Golson, *Construction*

Natasha Clay, *Design*

Jeff Hornsby, *Finance & Audits*

Allison Green, *Media & Community Relations*

Kidada Dixon, *Research & Development*

Chris Moon, *North Region, Tuscumbia Area*

Derrick Simpson, *North Region, Tuscumbia Area*

Blake Miller, *East Central Region, Birmingham Area*

Benji Cantrell, *West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area*

Tracy Fletcher, *West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area*

Chris Bedwell, *West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area*

Carol Hall, *Southeast Region*

David Bush, *Southeast Region, Troy Area*

Jason Fox, *Southeast Region, Montgomery Area*

Tammy Evers, *Southwest Region, Grove Hill*

Randy Harville, *Southwest Region, Mobile Area*

Spring 2018 Class

Andrew Buxbaum, *Air Transportation*

Brooke Prince, *Bridge*

Chad Taunton, *Bridge*

Shondra Swinney, *Compliance & Business Opportunities*

Alan Patrick, *Computer Services*

Andy Crenshaw, *Computer Services*

Adam Sanford, *Local Transportation*

Oretta Clemons, *Design*

Wade Seymore, *Design*

Kelly Brendle, *Finance & Audits*

Erika McKay, *Legal*

Robert Prescott, *Legal*

Morgan Musick, *Maintenance*

Daniel Jones, *Maintenance*

Chance Armstead, *Materials & Tests*

Renardo Dorsey, *Materials & Tests*

Amanda Deem, *Media & Community Relations*

Calvin Smith, *Research & Development*

Michael Pickett, *Right of Way*

Kendall Smith, *Southeast Region, Troy Area*

Jason Boothe, *Southeast Region, Troy Area*

Ramsey Ashmore, *Southeast Region, Montgomery Area*

Daniel Ganus, *Southwest Region, Grove Hill*

Aaron Richardson, *Southwest Region, Grove Hill*

Charod Jones, *Southwest Region, Mobile Area*

John Reece, *Southwest Region, Mobile Area*



Spring 2018 ALDOT Leadership Class

Front Row (L to R): Andrew Buxbaum (Air Transportation), Adam Sanford (Local Transportation), Amanda Deem (Media & Community Relations), Shondra Swinney (Compliance & Business Opportunities), Chance Armstead (Materials & Tests), Brooke Prince (Bridge), and Morgan Musick (Maintenance).

Middle Row (L to R): Andy Crenshaw (Computer Services), Ramsey Ashmore (Southeast Region-Montgomery), Kendall Smith (Southeast Region-Troy), Oretta Clemons (Design), Kelly Brendle (Finance & Audits), Erika McKay (Legal), Wade Seymore (Design) and Aaron Richardson (Southwest Region-Grove Hill).

Back Row (L to R): Calvin Smith (Research & Development), Robert Prescott (Legal), Daniel Jones (Maintenance), Chad Taunton (Bridge), Charod Jones (Southwest Region-Mobile), Jason Boothe (Southeast Region-Troy), Michael Pickett (Right of Way), John Reece (Southwest Region-Mobile), Daniel Ganus (Southwest Region-Grove Hill), Alan Patrick (Computer Services) and Renardo Dorsey (Materials & Tests).

Traffic website, app provide motorists with real-time updates

Planning travel routes throughout state maintained roadways is now easier than ever.

ALDOT touts a traffic website and app that are designed to provide the public with up-to-the-minute traffic information, road conditions and work zone updates in one convenient location.

ALGOTraffic.com, which first debuted in 2016, is overseen from each Regional Traffic Management Center. Operators scan data feeds for incidents statewide and coordinate with district administrators, the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency and other emergency responders to provide motorists with accurate information.

The website and app allows users to view traffic cameras and road conditions before traveling. Each camera shows users a live feed and brings a clearer understanding of traffic flow. ALGOTraffic also tells users which lanes

are temporarily closed during a crash or work zone and an estimated time for reopening.

Finding the right traffic website or app can be difficult with several on the market, but Chris Hilyer, State TSM&O Administrator, said that ALGOTraffic should be highly considered due to its verification standard.

“ALGOTraffic utilizes many of these app sources to garner intelligence, but always verifies them for accuracy before confirming and posting issues,” Hilyer said. “ALDOT is appreciative of the public private partnerships we have with many of these companies. ALGOTraffic provides government trusted, emergency responder verified information in real-time. This provides our user with the most accurate and timely notification to make informed decisions and ensure the safest verified route to their destination.”



ALDOT plans to bolster ALGOTraffic later this year and into 2019 with many new updates that include: rest area and welcome center kiosk dashboards, travel times to locations, detailed weather information from the National Weather Service, video portal and wait time for the Mobile Bay Ferry.

US-98: BP Money Fuels Construction

Construction has resumed on the much-needed US 98/SR-158 roadway in Mobile County, commonly nicknamed “Bloody 98” by locals who travel the route daily. The two-lane portion of US-98 from the Mississippi State Line to Snow Road has long held this nickname due to the number of severe accidents. The substantial amount of large commercial vehicles, tourists and locals that frequent this route from neighboring states to reach I-10 increases the risk daily for potential traffic accidents and delays. To alleviate the heavy volume of traffic, ALDOT began constructing a four-lane extension from SR-158 to connect it to US-98 at the Mississippi/Alabama state line in 2001.

The Safe 98 initiative has proven to be no easy feat as it faced a

setback in 2007 which halted the project due to litigation around environmental concerns and required the construction plans to be redesigned and additional right of way to be purchased. As a result, ALDOT formed a Safe 98 community outreach group to keep those living near or on the path of the project informed and updated frequently. This effort helped to reestablish trust with local partners and residents in the area to ensure them that ALDOT was committed to providing a safe, efficient and environmentally sound roadway for all.

Alabama was awarded \$1 billion in the BP oil spill lawsuit settlement and \$40 million of that settlement went toward funding the continuation of US-98/SR-158. Design immediately resumed and plans which had been ready to bid

from previous years were quickly updated and advertised for letting for construction. Even with a financial boost, ALDOT still needed almost \$160 million to complete the entire four-lane route. As a result, engineers began phasing the project’s construction with the focus of getting two lanes completed from the state line to Schillinger Road. Currently, two portions of the project are under construction with another two projects scheduled to let later this year.

In the short term, ALDOT has chosen to add additional safety features to the existing highway. In 2018, ALDOT installed centerline rumble stripe along the two-lane portions of the road. Rumble striping is comprised of grooved patterns on the road which warns drivers audibly and with physical

vibration whenever they are running off the side of the road or in this case, crossing over into the opposite lane. This is the first State/U.S. roadway in Alabama to have rumble striping in the center of the road. ALDOT also placed additional raised pavement markers in areas, providing more visibility to motorists at night or during heavy rain.

Two lanes on the new roadway are anticipated to be complete by 2022, which will complete the connection from Mississippi to I-65. As funding uncertainty remains, ALDOT will continue to look for opportunities to complete the entire new four-lane freeway as it was designed.



An aerial view of the SR-158 extension project from Lott Road to Schillinger Road.



A sediment control basin which is a part of the storm water management at SR-158 extension project from Lott Road to Schillinger Road.



Eastbound bridge extension over Big Creek. ALDOT is prepping the super structure and setting girders.



ALDOT is extending the eastbound bridge over Big Creek.

\$6.8 Million: The High Cost of Litter

In 2017, ALDOT spent approximately \$6.8 million on litter pickup along Alabama's highways. ALDOT partners with and funds anti-litter non-profit organizations like Alabama PALS (People Against a Littered State) and Keep Alabama Beautiful. With those partnerships, ALDOT promotes and advertises litter awareness, hosts Alabama Coastal Cleanup and the statewide "Don't Drop It on Alabama" Spring Cleanup initiative. ALDOT contributed \$292,204 to PALS and \$113,303 to Keep Alabama Beautiful. Approximately 926 miles of roadway in 2017 had active volunteers from each organization participating in litter cleanup. ALDOT also has 676 anti-litter signs along roadways throughout the state to keep motorists mindful.

This year, ALDOT is launching a public awareness campaign to inform the public of Alabama's anti-littering law and the fines they are subject to if they are caught littering. "Trash Costs Cash" is the title of a new public service announcement produced by ALDOT that will

begin making its way to Alabama residents through social media sites like Facebook and YouTube and television and radio stations. The PSA highlights the high cost of littering fines, challenging people to think about those costs before throwing out their fast-food wrapper.



The "Green Team" from Brookwood High School in Tuscaloosa County is an Adopt-A-Mile Partner

ALDOT Project Wins Prestigious Pavement Award

ALDOT and McCartney Construction Co. recently received the National Asphalt Pavement Association's top award: the 2017 Sheldon G. Hayes Award.

The award is named for Sheldon G. Hayes, a founder of NAPA and the association's first chairman. Hayes spent his career striving for better construction techniques and improvements in the quality of asphalt pavement.

A two-year evaluation process is used to identify the country's highest quality highway pavements. All highway pavement projects using more than 50,000 tons of asphalt are eligible for consideration.

The award was for paving on the final phase of the Anniston Eastern Bypass.

"More than a decade of work was completed in 2017 to build the Anniston Eastern Bypass that helped ease traffic congestion caused by more than 40,000 vehicles a day on U.S. 431 through downtown Anniston," said DeJarvis Leonard, East Central Region Engineer.

Leonard and George H. Conner, Deputy Director of Operations, accepted the award along with McCartney Construction's owners and their management team during a ceremony on Feb. 14, 2018, at NAPA's 63rd Annual Meeting in San Diego.

"ALDOT is very appreciative and thankful for this recognition of the work done by McCartney Construction and ALDOT's project management and inspection team," Conner said.



From Left To Right: **Craig Parker** (2018 NAPA Chairman), **Michael H. McCartney** (McCartney Construction), **M.B. McCartney** (McCartney Construction), **Keith Madison** (McCartney Construction), **Al Cantellano** (McCartney Construction), **Perry Allen** (McCartney Construction), **Kelly Howard** (McCartney Construction), **George Conner**, **DeJarvis Leonard**, **Dan Gallagher** (2017 NAPA Chairman)



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