

ALDOT WINTER 2022 Inside Lane



Governor Holds Groundbreaking Ceremony for Historic West Alabama Corridor

On Jan. 1, 2022, Governor Kay Ivey made the historic announcement in her State of the State Address that the dream of connecting rural west Alabama with a four-lane highway was finally coming to fruition in the Southwest Region's Grove Hill Area. The announcement was made possible thanks to the Rebuild Alabama Act legislation in 2019, which raised the state motor fuel taxes by ten cents over three years. This increase generates additional revenue annually to help address the infrastructure needs in the state that were difficult to achieve at previous funding levels.

Dubbed the "West Alabama Corridor," ALDOT was tasked with finding the most economical and environmentally friendly route to provide a four-lane highway from Thomasville to Tuscaloosa. After months of analysis, a symbolic groundbreaking ceremony was held in November 2021 to unveil the selected route to the public. The event was well attended and buzzing with anticipation and enthusiasm for the project. The project will provide a much needed four-lane connection to interstates and numerous development opportunities to a region that has historically struggled economically.

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Gov. Ivey Speaks at the West Alabama Corridor Groundbreaking

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Driving Through a Work Zone – Not a Game

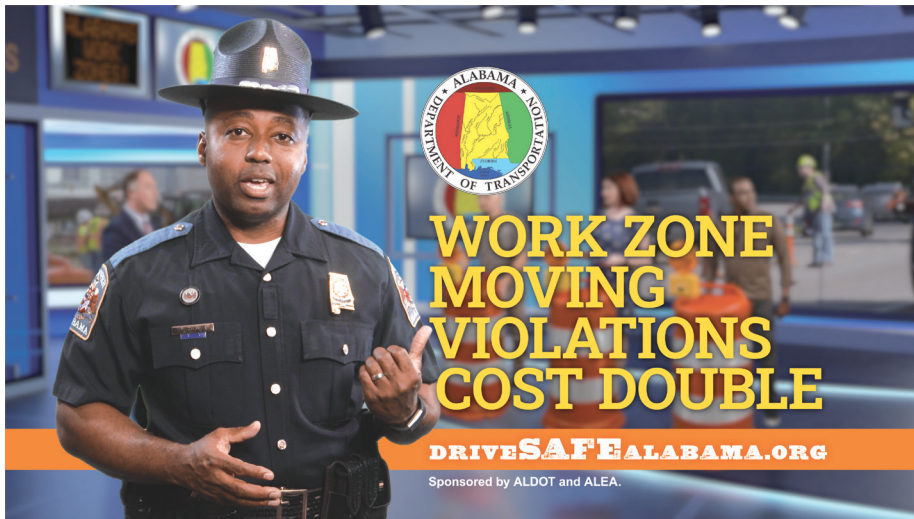


Game shows like Jeopardy and Family Feud attract large TV viewing audiences. Building on this popularity, the new game show-inspired public service announcement from Drive Safe Alabama was created to bring attention to a recent change to the Alabama work zone law.

“Not a game,” is the theme of the new PSA. Television and radio stations statewide will broadcast the PSA, and the campaign will be shared on the Drive Safe Alabama Twitter and Facebook pages.

“We want drivers to be aware not only of the new fines in a work zone, but of the people who are putting their lives at great risk to keep Alabama roads in good condition,” said Allison Green, Drive Safe Alabama Coordinator with ALDOT. “Driving through a work zone is not a game, and our new PSA highlights some of the violations that will result in double fines and that could cost a road worker their life.”

“As Rebuild Alabama projects begin to cover the state, more and more traffic related work zones will be encountered,” said John Whitman with Mobile Asphalt Co. and current president of the Alabama Road Builders Association. “With the implementation of the new “Double Fines” law, we anticipate slower speeds and heightened awareness from the traveling public, which will no doubt provide a much safer environment for the dads, moms, brothers, sisters, sons and daughters who wear the vest every day.”



New PSA with game show theme highlights double fines for work zone violations.
top row

ALEA Trooper Reginal King tells PSA viewers that work zone violations are not a game.
bottom row

Work Zone Safe Driving Tips

- **Drive alert.** Don't drive distracted by texting, eating or other activities that take your hands off the wheel. Look for highway workers, reduced speed limits and changes to the roadway.
- **Move over.** Give workers more space if the roadway allows.
- **Don't tailgate.** Keep a safe distance from the vehicle ahead of you.

Safety: Culture, Training or Both

Over the last half of 2021, ALDOT has had four fatalities among our workforce. Two employees were ALDOT employees and two were contract workers. Also, during 2021 there were 165 injuries within our workforce. Those injuries range from:

- **Sprain/Strains** *Pulling on an item that causes a body part to be strained*
- **Vehicle Collision** *Pulling out in front of someone or rear ended by another vehicle*
- **Eye Injury** *Weed eating when an object flew into the eye*
- **Cut/Laceration** *Cut leg with chainsaw*

After these injuries and fatalities, we are often left with many questions.

- *Did you have the proper "Personal Protective Equipment" (PPE)?*
- *Was there another way you could have accomplished this task that could have reduced the strain on your body or someone else's body?*
- *Was traffic control set up properly?*
- *How can we do better?*
- *Does improving safety amongst our workforce involve culture, training or both?*

We must have the training we need to do our jobs safely. We also need to talk with each other more about the situations that arise on the job to help each other stay safe. By doing so, we begin to change the safety culture at ALDOT for the better.

Remembering Fallen Workers

Joseph John "Joe" Bonner

57, of Oakman, Transportation Maintenance Technician II, East Central Region, Birmingham Area-District 1, passed away on Monday, Oct. 18, 2021.

Brandon Barber

33, of Prattville, Transportation Maintenance Technician I, West Central Region, Tuscaloosa Area, District 54 passed away Aug. 30, 2021.



Bridge Dedicated to Fallen Hero SSGT Forrest B. Sibley

Oct. 7, 2021, Staff Sgt. Forrest Sibley was honored with the dedication of a bridge in his name. Family, friends, local officials and military personnel came together to honor the fallen hero. The bridge over the L&N Railroad on US-231 South in Blount County is officially the SSGT Forrest B. Sibley Memorial Bridge.

Sibley was enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 2008. He was deployed four times and was a recipient of the Bronze Star four times, two Purple Hearts and the Air Force Commendation Medal. Sibley was a

combat controller deployed in Afghanistan in 2015 as a part of Operation Freedom. On Aug. 26, 2015, he and Capt. Matthew Roland, a special tactics officer, were at a vehicle checkpoint at Camp Antonik, Afghanistan when they came under fire.

During the bridge dedication ceremony, ALDOT personnel managed traffic for the safety of those in attendance.

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Military personnel stand at attention during dedication ceremony.



Bridge Dedicated to Fallen Hero SSGT Forrest B. Sibley *Continued from page 3*

The ceremony began with Rep. David Sandridge and Sen. Shay Shelnuttt joining military personnel for push-ups on the bridge in honor of Staff Sgt. Sibley. More than 100 community members and local veterans organizations attended the ceremony.

ALDOT is proud to assist with all Memorial Signage on state-maintained roadways. ALDOT works with Alabama State Senators and Representatives and sponsoring organizations to locate the stretches of roadway to be named. ADLOT also oftentimes assists in drafting Resolutions. After the Resolution has been signed by the Governor, ALDOT begins the process of acquiring funds from the paying organizations and designing and installing the signs.



Military personnel pose for a picture at dedication ceremony. *above*

Rep. David Sandridge and Sen. Shay Shelnuttt join military personnel for push-ups in honor of Staff Sgt. Sibley *right*



Tales from the Road

ALDOT's ASAP drivers encounter all kinds of situations as they work to keep roads clear and traffic flowing. ALDOT's ASAP drivers truly rise to the occasion, whether it be removing a frog that hopped a ride with a frightened driver or helping someone who ran out of gas. The email below is an example of how helpful they are to the traveling public they serve.

Email from Mr. Joe Albree to SE Region Traffic Management Center Director Scott Harris sent Friday, July 16, 2021

Dear Mr. Harris,

Thanks for giving me a few minutes of your time yesterday afternoon to offer praises for your ASAP technician, Mr. Jeff Washington.

About 1:15 PM, on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, I had a blowout on my left-front tire. I was driving about 70 mph in the middle lane of I-85, about half-way between the Bell Road overpass and the Taylor Road exit, on my way to a doctor's appointment. Fortunately, I was able to control my 2000 Silverado pick-up and guide it onto the flat part of the median in the center of the interstate.

After about 40-45 minutes of unsuccessful efforts on my phone with a representative of my insurance agent to get me some roadside assistance, Mr. Jeff Washington pulled over in his ALDOT ASAP truck.

My first impression was that this is a gentleman. Mr. Washington assured me that, if I had a workable spare tire, he could and would change it for me. But it was not easy. First, getting the shaft for removing the spare wheel was a challenge, and then getting that mechanism to work lowering the wheel and tire at the back of the truck presented further difficulties. I am 82, and I might have been able to manage all of these difficulties twenty years ago, but then again quite possibly not. But, Mr. Washington worked his way through these problems. Next he checked the air pressure in my spare tire and inspected it to make sure it would be expected to get me safely off the interstate and then across town to Sexton's Tire store.

Lanett Welcome Center Holds Grand Re-Opening Ceremony

Gov. Kay Ivey headlined the program of speakers to celebrate the Jan. 14, 2022 re-opening of the Lanett Welcome Center. Alabama Tourism Department Director Lee Sentell emceed the event, welcoming attendees and thanking Gov. Ivey and the Alabama Department of Transportation for their efforts in bringing this project to fruition. Joining Gov. Ivey and Director Sentell on the program were State Senator Randy Price, State Representative Debbie Wood, and State Representative Bob Fincher, with East Central Region Engineer Dejarvis Leonard giving a special "thank you" from ALDOT.

The Lanett Welcome Center, located on the southbound side of Interstate 85 in Chambers County near the Georgia state line, is expected to host more than 200,000 vehicles annually. The 16,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility will serve as the shiny new "front door" to the state for travelers. It features live traffic information from the ALGO Traffic System displayed on two large screens inside the Welcome Center. There are also improved restrooms, an indoor concessions area, and a larger information desk. Picnic tables and dog walks will be available outdoors, as well. This new facility will also serve as the template for updates to other welcome centers across the state going forward.



Gov. Ivey cuts the ribbon at the grand re-opening *above top*

Gov. Ivey joins in celebrating the reopening of the Lanett Welcome Center *above bottom*

Yes, Mr. Jeff Washington was an excellent technician. And more: through it all he was a trustworthy ambassador for ALDOT and for the State of Alabama.

The ASAP program is a worthy contribution to the service and safety of our highways, especially the interstates. Thanks to the persons who actually do the work day in and day out, with a special appreciation to Mr. Jeff Washington.

Sincerely yours,

Joe Albree



ASAP program trucks and technicians Jerry Farmer, Brian Ninesling and Jeff Washington *left to right*

Doing our Part!



ALDOT's Central office held several fundraisers during the 2021 holiday season in support of the State Combined Campaign. Since 1993, Alabama's State employees have donated more than \$18 million to State Combined Campaign charitable organizations.

The Halloween celebration featured the Hotdog "Fun"draiser, which brought in \$936 in donations. Then, employees wore their favorite football team's color to a chili cook-off and raised more than \$200. During the Christmas season, there was a bake sale with Santa. Cakes, pies, cookies and photos with Santa raised \$435. With these efforts, the Central Office donated almost \$2,000 to the State Combined Campaign.

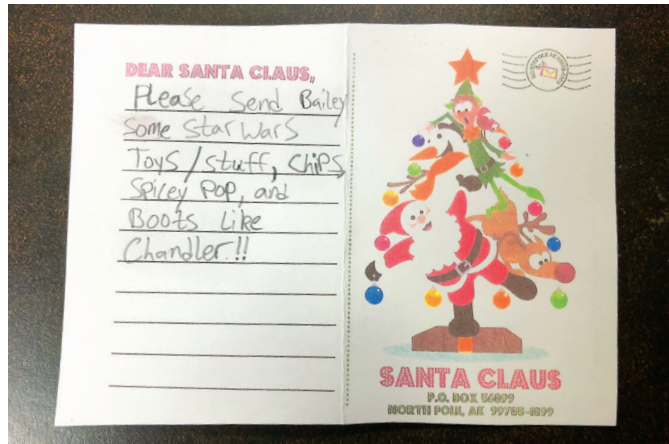


Gameday themed chili cook-off *top row*

Halloween hotdog "Fun"draiser *left*

Bake Sale with Santa *right*

Holiday Happenings



Troy Area Christmas Banquet *left top*

Troy Area Christmas Banquet *left bottom*

Postcards to Santa Mail Box at the DeKalb County Welcome Center *top right*

A postcard to Santa left at the DeKalb County Welcome Center *middle right*

Live Music Performance at the Troy Area Christmas Banquet *bottom right*

Quarterly Awards



Welcome Center Winner for the 4th Quarter

Sumter County Welcome Center

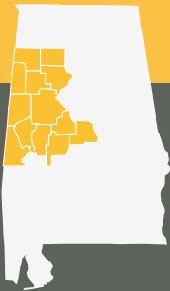
left to right Tommy Collins Jr., Martez Rodgers, Jeraldine Seals, Bea Wade
Not shown De’Kendrick Hutchins, Terry Washington



Rest Area Winner for the 4th Quarter

I-85 Northbound Macon County

left to right Mary Crockett and Reginald Person



West Central Region News

ALDOT Hosts Traffic Incident Management Class

Standing in front of 35 first responders for eight hours, Ken Colvert handled the class with ease. Colvert, ALDOT’s West Central Traffic Management Center manager and 21-year veteran firefighter with the City of Birmingham, taught safety clearance protocols and offered his unique perspective on handling roadway incidents on Nov. 10 on the University of Alabama campus.

ALDOT hosted a traffic incident management class for first responders as part of National Crash Responder Safety Week, which took place Nov. 8-14.

“Getting together to discuss incident responses with the men and women who

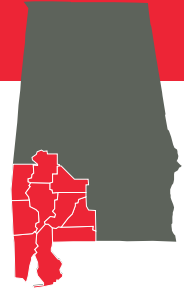
are out on the roadway was invaluable,” Colvert said. “We’re all working toward the same goal. Anything we can do to make it safer and faster; we’re all for it.”

Minor crashes can become a major problem, as traffic incidents account for nearly 25 percent of all congestion nationwide. The likelihood of a secondary crash increases by 2.8 percent for every minute an incident is in the roadway. Often, these secondary crashes are worse and more deadly than the initial incident.

Crash response accounts for 20 percent of on-duty firefighter deaths per year and is the second leading cause of accidental

law enforcement officer death. Forty-four emergency responders were struck and killed while working a crash in the United States in 2019. The towing industry is 15 times deadlier than all other private industries combined, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Everyone has to do their part to make our roadways safer, and that includes us,” Colvert said. “We hope this class was beneficial for first responders, and we’ll continue to hone our craft and evaluate every aspect to see what we can do to improve on our end.”



Governor Holds Groundbreaking Ceremony for Historic West Alabama Corridor *Continued from Cover*

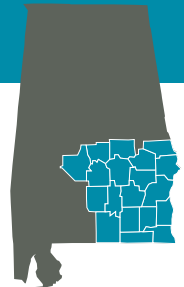
The opportunity to change the landscape of the region brings hope and excitement to those that call this area home. "To say that this is an exciting time for west Alabama and the potential that this route could bring is an understatement," stated Matthew Ericksen, Region Engineer.

Construction plans are nearly complete for the first segment known as the Linden Bypass, which is scheduled to begin construction in summer 2022.

Just as exciting is the method by which ALDOT plans to design and solicit bids for the nearly \$750 million dollar corridor. The larger segments of the project will likely be procured through a process new to the state, known as Design-Build. DOT's have found that they can accelerate project delivery, lower costs and improve project quality with the Design Build Model. In the Design Build Process, project design occurs

concurrently with construction. The benefits to this method are that it allows the contractor to use innovative techniques, provides opportunities for cost savings and reduces the overall construction time as design work and construction can occur concurrently, helping this highway dream become a reality sooner rather than later.

Map of the planned West Alabama Corridor scheduled to begin construction in summer 2022



Edward Kelly Retiring from District 63 After 37 Years of ALDOT Service

The Southeast Region of ALDOT has a total of 12 districts, six in each area, and approximately 3,000 miles.

In District 63, covering Montgomery County, there are approximately 225 center line miles and fuel pumps that disperse over 320,000 gallons of fuel annually. The District high average daily traffic is 1,013,836 on I-85 in downtown Montgomery.

The District is home to over 50 ALDOT employees, including Edward Kelly. Kelly has been the District Administrator for District 63 since 2014. At the end of January 2022, Kelly will retire

from ALDOT where he has served for 37 years, since November 1984.

Kelly's first position with the Department was an Engineer Assistant I, in Huntsville where he worked on the survey crew for the Wall Triana Highway in Madison County before there was an I-565.

During his career one thing that he learned and wants to pass on to others is, "Be kind to all, because you never know who your next boss might be."

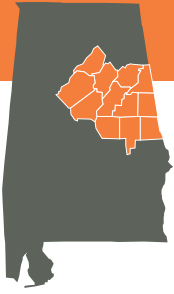
Steve Graben, Southeast Region Engineer, said, "I never knew of an employee who transferred or



Pictured from left Elaine Garrette, Edward Kelly, and Jann Lesley. Above

left Edward's leadership because of Edward. People follow him because they want to. Edward, I will miss your steady, faithful leadership and

your incredible wit. Thank you for all the big and little things you did to help others. Congratulations!"



Mountain Expressway and City Walk BHAM



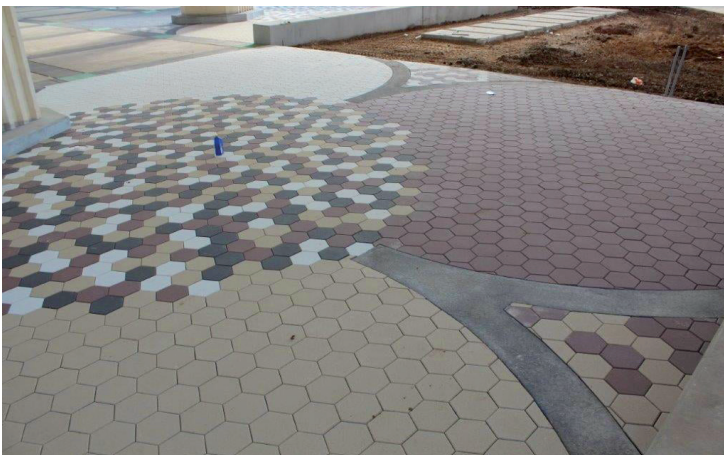
The story of the Red Mountain Expressway dates back to 1962 when ALDOT faced the unique challenge of constructing a gateway to downtown Birmingham designed to go through the middle of Red Mountain. Prior to the construction of Red Mountain Expressway, motorists had to travel over the high rolling hills of Red Mountain to reach downtown. The project was originally planned to be a tunnel that would go through the mountain but the cost of constructing a tunnel proved to be too expensive, so the decision was made to cut through the mountain instead. The project cost \$19 million at the time of construction and took seven years of digging and grading before it was complete and open to traffic.

The Red Mountain Cut, also known as “the cut,” is one of the most recognizable geological features in Birmingham and is believed to contain more geologic history than any other road cut in the United States. During construction, an estimated 2 million cubic yards of the Red Mountain Ridge was removed revealing geologic strata dating back more than 150 million years. The cut through the mountain, which is owned by ALDOT, resulted in a 210-foot deep, 1,640 foot-highway cut through Red Mountain which would later be named the Elton B. Stephens Expressway. The cut is one of seven National Natural Landmarks in Alabama.



In 1971, a city-owned natural history museum called The Red Mountain Museum opened adjacent to the rock to pay homage to its geologic wonder, and an interpretive trail was built above the highway. The interpretive walkway was closed in the late 1980s due to safety concerns, but the interpretive signs were left in place.

Red Mountain Expressway and its geologic history can be seen in modern day projects like City Walk BHAM, currently under construction. Many of the colors found in the design of City Walk BHAM are inspired by the colors in the mountain. Specifically, the climbing rock feature at City Walk BHAM will mimic the colors and textures of Red Mountain.



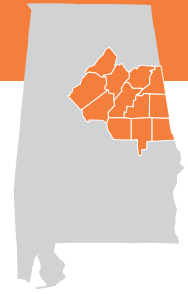
ALDOT’s Transportation Director John R. Cooper recalls riding the Red Mountain Expressway as a young man. “Red Mountain Expressway is personally nostalgic to me as I vividly remember riding the expressway when it first opened to the public and

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Construction of the City Walk Amphitheater *top*

Red Mountain Expressway Cut *middle* (Greg Lewis of Arlington, VA, via Wikimedia Commons)

Work beginning on the food truck aisle *bottom*



Mountain Expressway and City Walk BHAM *Continued*

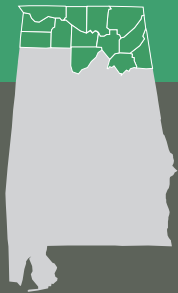
being in awe at the engineering and construction equipment used to cut through the mountain," said Cooper. "Seeing the history of Red Mountain Expressway influence our projects today like City Walk BHAM is a great source of pride for both our state and ALDOT as an agency," says Cooper.

After 50 years, we are taking bids on a project to refurbish Red Mountain Expressway, which will include removing the old dilapidated guardrails and replacing them with median barrier

rails and concrete median rails. This will also include adding auxiliary lanes in both directions between Highland Avenue and 21st Street.

Red Mountain Expressway will enhance City Walk BHAM by not only serving as a primary access point to the public space, but the connection to its geologic history and design influence on City Walk BHAM will greatly enhance the visitor experience.

North Region News



New State Highway Will Help Meet North Alabama Needs

ALDOT is improving a former county road to create a corridor connecting two major highways to a rapidly-growing Limestone County industrial area that is home to the massive Mazda Toyota Manufacturing USA facility.

Huntsville Brownsferry Road was added to the state inventory as SR-304 in preparation for the Rebuild Alabama project to expand it to a five-lane highway between US-31 and I-565. Contractor Rogers Group began construction Aug. 16 on the \$13.4 million project to add lanes to more than a mile of road. Another \$2.8 million Rebuild Alabama project to widen the overpass on Huntsville Brownsferry Road at I-65 started in 2020 and is near completion. Miller & Miller is the bridge contractor.

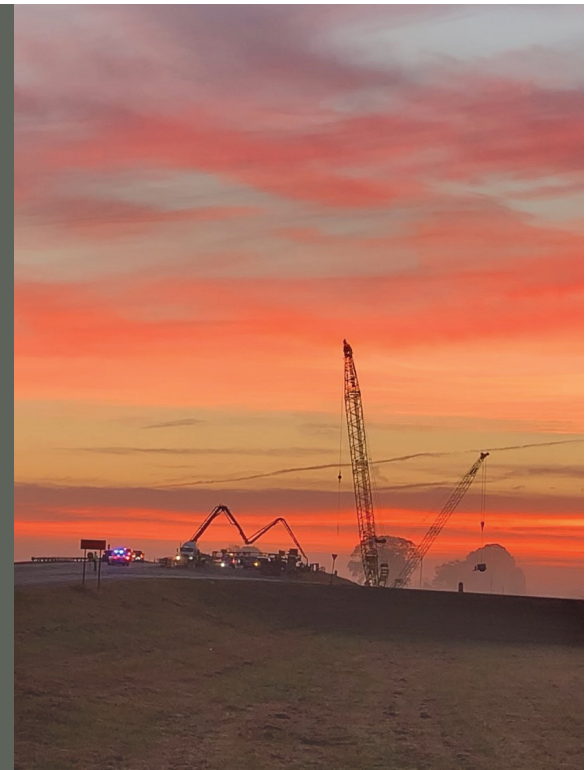
The \$2.3-billion, 400-acre MTM facility, a joint venture between Mazda Motor Corp. and Toyota Motor Corp., broke ground at the site on Greenbrier Parkway and Old Highway 20 in November 2018. Production

started in September, and the plant is expected to employ up to 4,000 people when it reaches full operations in 2022.

"While it's exciting to see so much economic development, all this growth presents challenges for ALDOT," said Region Engineer Curtis Vincent. "Bolstered by Rebuild Alabama, we believe we are up to the challenge of expanding our transportation system to meet growing needs."

In a separate, city-led project, the City of Huntsville will widen Huntsville Brownsferry Road east of I-65 to the newly-constructed Greenbrier Parkway. When completed, the ALDOT and city projects will link with previous projects on Greenbrier Parkway and Old Highway 20 to complete a corridor from US-31 at Tanner, between Athens and Decatur, to I-565 at Greenbrier and County Line Road at the edge of Madison County.

Rebuild Alabama also funded the \$14.3 million widening of I-565 to six lanes



Early morning superstructure concrete pour on the SR304 project

between I-65 and County Line Road. The project began in 2020 and was recently completed by Rogers Group. Another recent project made \$10.3 million in modifications to the eastbound I-565 ramps at Exit 3 (Greenbrier Road) to improve safety and traffic flow.



1409 Coliseum Blvd.
Montgomery, AL 36110

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Transportation Director

John R. Cooper

Chief Engineer

Edward N. Austin

Deputy Director for Operations

George H. Conner

Deputy Director for Administration

Lamar S. Woodham, Jr.

Deputy Director for Fleet Management

Willie Bradley

Inside Lane Staff

M&CR Bureau Chief

Tony Harris

Communications Manager

Allison Green

Publications Coordinator

Haley Ansley

Public Information Specialist

Josh Phillips

Public Information Specialist

Amanda Deem

Contributors

Seth Burkett, North Region
Linda Crockett, East Central Region
John McWilliams, West Central Region
Brantley Kirk, Southeast Region
Amanda Deem, Southwest Region

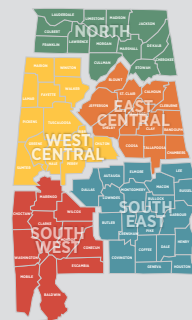
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Alabama Department of Transportation
Media & Community Relations Bureau
1409 Coliseum Boulevard
Montgomery, Alabama 36110

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Employees: Be sure to keep your mailing address updated with your office manager.



5 regions
divided into **10 areas**

The **Central Office** includes **21 offices & bureaus**

 ALDOT maintains almost **11,000 miles** of federal and state owned **roadway**

ALDOT maintains almost **6,000 bridges** 

 ALDOT employs around **4,400 people**

DID YOU KNOW?

ALDOT began as the State Highway Commission in 1911

Alabama's first interstate project began in 1957 and ran 28 miles from Kimberly to Cullman

The Wallace Tunnels, opened in 1973, took 3.5 years to build and are the only tunnels on I-10

There are more than 210,000 lane miles of roadway in Alabama

ALDOT by the Numbers