

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Inside Lane

Summer 2020

Meeting the COVID-19 Challenge

As coronavirus was becoming a worldwide pandemic in early March, ALDOT personnel went into action. The challenge was making sure that ALDOT essential services were available to the people of Alabama, while taking measures to protect our employees and slow the spread of the virus.

Through coordination with Governor Kay Ivey's office, the Alabama Emergency Management Agency and the Alabama Department of

Public Health, ALDOT began navigating what continues to be a public health emergency. Internally, the Department focused on the deep cleaning of its facilities statewide for the safety and welfare of employees, contractors and the public.

"I am thankful for our Department's essential workers and how they came together to fulfill our mission that allows people and goods to get where they need to go," said Transportation Director John Cooper. "And they did this while taking extra precautions to protect the health of themselves and their co-workers."

At a time when trucking and the shipment of food, healthcare supplies and other essential goods were vital, ALDOT prioritized the functions necessary to keep Alabama's interstates and highways open, including maintenance and construction projects. ALDOT kept Alabama Rest Areas open, and custodial staff took extra measures to sanitize and clean for the health of the traveling public and ALDOT employees.

For the safety of those traveling, ALDOT continued to monitor and respond to traffic incidents and

roadway issues. Alabama Service & Assistance Patrol (ASAP) responders were an especially welcomed sight for motorists experiencing issues on the roadway.

In early April, the State of Alabama and ALDOT transitioned from essential services only to full operations. Through this transition, representatives from the ALDOT Central Office, Regions and Areas are working a plan for employees to perform all functions of the Department in a "new normal" operating environment, while minimizing the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

ALDOT is adapting to effectively operate in an environment that continues to include the challenge of the COVID-19 virus. Flexible work schedules, social distancing, use of personal protective equipment and enhanced cleaning are all part of how ALDOT now operates. A commitment to take these measures to protect each other is the success factor that will allow ALDOT to continue operating in the "new normal."

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ALDOT poster promoting ways to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Why I Wear a Mask: An Open Letter to ALDOT Employees



John Cooper
Transportation Director

For some time now, I have wanted to communicate with you about COVID and the way it has impacted us—both at ALDOT and the world at large. I have grown to despise this disease—it is the unseen enemy that enters our world in mysterious ways, threatens the existence we cherish, and affects all aspects of our lives, both large and small. If you are like me, you are tired of take-out food, the absence of silverware and real glasses, and you miss the ability to just shake hands or give someone a good hug!

Americans are accustomed to defeating our enemies—we mass the resources needed and “get the job done.” To defeat a disease that spreads primarily from person to person, we could have zero contact with each other for a few months and it should die out—but zero contact is not possible. It is much more realistic that the development and deployment of a vaccine will be the key to ultimate victory. Until that time, since we cannot live or work without some degree of human interaction, and the world

cannot, and will not, come to a complete standstill, the question becomes: “How can we minimize COVID’s impact and reasonably protect our employees while they perform their duties?”

Even though we do not currently have the ability to defeat COVID, we can take steps to minimize its spread. The first step is to maintain as much distance from each other as possible—the most common guideline is six feet. As much as possible, work is being redesigned and rescheduled to make “social distancing” practical. Secondly, our janitorial staff are working hard to maintain an environment that minimizes the likelihood of infection from touching surfaces. Finally, each of us has a personal responsibility to do our part by regularly washing our hands and practicing social distancing.

We can also minimize the impact of COVID and reduce its spread by being as certain as possible that we do not infect each other at work by taking our temperature every morning. While certainly not a

fool-proof mechanism, there is more than a 50% probability that COVID infection (or some other type) will result in elevated body temperature. For that reason, temperature screening is more likely than not to identify someone who should not remain at work and therefore avoid potentially infecting their coworkers.

Finally, we get to the most burdensome area of personal responsibility I am asking you to assume—I urge you to wear a mask whenever possible. From all I can read, even the most basic of masks will catch and control a very high percentage of droplets a person exhales. Simply put, if a mask intercepts droplets that might otherwise reach the air we breathe or the surfaces we touch, then the virus won’t be transmitted from an infected person to someone else—which is especially important when an infected person may not have any symptoms and is unaware they are carrying the virus

I dislike wearing a mask. It’s just unpleasant and abnormal. However, I also do not want to live with the possibility, even if remote, that I might accidentally infect one or more of you. Because your safety is more important than my comfort, I am committed to wearing a mask and I urge you to do so as well! ALDOT will provide them, but only you can decide to wear one.

In summary, be thoughtful and diligent in keeping your distance whenever possible. Don’t touch things unnecessarily. Wash your hands frequently. Check your temperature and wear a mask. Together, these actions protect yourself, your fellow employees, and others with whom you interact. Thank you.

HATE LOSING MONEY?

TAKE THE CENSUS TODAY.
MY2020CENSUS.GOV

Alabama
2020 CENSUS

The advertisement features five stacks of silver coins of varying heights, arranged from tallest on the left to shortest on the right. The text "HATE LOSING MONEY?" is written in large, bold, red capital letters across the middle of the stacks. At the bottom left, it says "TAKE THE CENSUS TODAY. MY2020CENSUS.GOV" and at the bottom right, it says "Alabama 2020 CENSUS".

Ivey, Other Officials Gather to Dedicate I-59/20 Bridges

On a sunny Friday afternoon in early 2020, a cavalcade of vehicles lined the westbound section of Birmingham's brand new I-59/20 bridges past the 31st Street entrance ramp. Belonging to state and local officials, contractor crews and media, these would be the first of many vehicles to traverse the bridges for years to come.

The crowd was present for the Jan. 17th dedication ceremony to celebrate the completion of the new bridges through the Central Business District, marking the end of the final phase of the I-59/20 bridge project. The \$725 million mega-project to overhaul I-59/20 through downtown Birmingham had been completed two months ahead of the March 21st deadline, earning the contractors a \$15 million bonus. The westbound lanes began opening the night of the ceremony, followed by eastbound lanes later that weekend.

After passing through a checkpoint at the 31st Street ramp and parking amongst the columns of vehicles, guests were shuttled to a large, white tent. The tent housed a small, but crowded stage that was flanked by United States and Alabama flags and faced several rows of seats for guests. There was also a designated area for the media. Traffic whizzed by on roads below, detouring around the construction area for the last time.

Mike Kemp, the president and CEO of Kemp Management Solutions, which provided project management support for the bridge project, presided as master of ceremonies. Kemp opened the ceremony by describing the great

achievement by ALDOT and the team of engineers, contractors, and consultants to create a "wider, safer, more quiet and more visually appealing" roadway in just one year.

Kemp recognized many of the notable attendees in the audience and on stage. Among them were Mark Bartlett, Alabama Division administrator for the Federal Highway Administration; Jefferson County Commissioner Sheila Tyson; Birmingham City Councilor Darrell O'Quinn; State Rep. Neil Rafferty; Tim Winn and Mike Brown of Johnson Brothers Corp., the project's Phase 3 contractor; and representatives from the offices of U.S. Senators Richard Shelby and Doug Jones and U.S. Representative Terri Sewell, who were unable to attend because of scheduling conflicts. State Representative Mary Moore had

also planned to attend but was unable because of a scheduling conflict.

Birmingham City Councilor Steven Hoyt delivered an invocation thanking God and all who had taken part in the bridge project before Governor Kay Ivey delivered the keynote address. She spoke on the importance of developing and maintaining Alabama's infrastructure for the state's economic prosperity.

"Year after year, our state continues to bring in several large companies that rely on this interstate to efficiently ship the products that provide thousands of good-paying jobs for the people of Alabama," Ivey said.

Ivey also thanked all those from both the public and private sectors who participate in the continued maintenance of a "safe

and efficient transportation system for all users" in Alabama.

U.S. Representative Gary Palmer then spoke, emphasizing the impact of the bridge and other infrastructure projects on the development of the state.

"When you're building a bridge, you're not just building a transportation structure," Palmer said. "You're closing divides, you're bridging gaps, but you're really launching into the future. And I think with what we're doing here today, this is another great step forward for the future of Birmingham and for the future of Alabama."

State Senator Rodger Smitherman thanked the citizens of Birmingham and the surrounding area who were forced to deal with the difficulties of travel while the project was ongoing.

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A new portion of the I-59/20 bridges heading westbound.

Ivey, Other Officials Gather to Dedicate I-59/20 Bridges, Continued

“For the people around here, it has been a grave inconvenience,” Smitherman said. “It’s one we didn’t mind doing at all, but it’s been a struggle. But now, I want to thank everybody for being patient so that we can have the progress that we have now.”

Like many of the other speakers, Smitherman highlighted the value of the bridge project

toward economic development.

“The flow of commerce is what this country is all about, and this is going to enhance our ability to be able to help grow jobs, move products and goods,” he said.

After Smitherman, remarks were made by James Fowler, representing the office of Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin,

Birmingham City Council President William Parker, Jefferson County Commission President Jimmie Stephens, BJCC Executive Director Tad Snider and finally ALDOT East Central Region Engineer DeJarvis Leonard.

Leonard identified the technical aspects and achievements of the project, including the erection of segmental bridges using the shoring tower method, which was a first in the U.S. He also noted that the bridges were being considered for awards from the American Segmental Bridge Institute, the Post-Tensioning Institute and the American Society of Civil Engineering.

The dedication ceremony concluded with a ribbon cutting. The red ribbon was held up by new “59/20 Bridge” signage that showed bridge iconography on the Interstate Highway shield. Ivey and Leonard took center at the cutting, sharing the large, ceremonial scissors and surrounded by the other speakers and distinguished guests who participated in the event.



Gov. Ivey and other officials cutting the ribbon in the I-59/20 Bridge Opening Ceremony.

Coronavirus Concerns Paint a Funding Picture Full of Uncertainty

The economic impacts of COVID-19 continue to be felt in countless ways throughout the world, and transportation funding has been no exception. Across the nation, state transportation departments are facing potential budget shortfalls that total in the tens of billions of dollars.

A large majority of transportation funding is motor fuel tax revenue. The lockdown that much of the country entered in the spring sent demand for gasoline falling, which greatly slowed revenue streams. According to the Federal Highway Administration, in April, Americans drove about 40 percent fewer miles than they did at the same time last year. In May, the decline was still down more than 25 percent. In Alabama, receipts for April and May gasoline taxes showed decreases of 33% and 17% percent, respectively, over the same months last year.

The crisis has hit some states much harder than others, especially those that haven’t raised their gas taxes in several decades, leaving them precariously reliant on federal funding. In North

Carolina, the transportation department’s cash reserves fell so low in May that it triggered a legal provision barring the department from entering into new contracts. The state had already announced it was delaying more than 100 projects, including a half-billion-dollar plan to widen a section of Interstate 95 to eight lanes.

Unlike some state transportation departments, ALDOT did not delay or push back any ongoing projects. While obviously bad for revenue, the decrease in traffic did provide a limited opportunity window for construction and maintenance that could be done safer and, in some cases, faster. ALDOT adopted a modified set of specifications, policies, and procedures in order to continue performing essential work while promoting safe and healthy work sites.

In recent weeks, demand for gas is rebounding as many have returned to work. Figures compiled by private companies analyzing cellphone location data indicate that travel nationwide is returning to near where it was in late winter. But the demand for gas nationally at

the end of June was still down 10 percent from the same point last year. Coronavirus concerns have caused the cancellation of numerous concerts, sporting events, and festivals that would have, in years past, created spikes in travel resulting in increases in gas tax revenue. The absence of these events will continue to echo throughout the budgets of government agencies and private companies alike.

Many are calling on Congress to step in and provide a rescue package. A five-year transportation bill was passed by the House of Representatives in early July, however, pundits speculate that it has little hope of passing the Senate in its current form. The Senate is also working to finalize its own five-year transportation plan.

While the true depth of the financial impact of the coronavirus crisis is yet to be determined, ALDOT remains committed to navigating it as sensibly and responsibly as possible.

Stable Solution: Rather than Rebuilding Road, ALDOT Bridging U.S. 231 Landslide

Where a four-lane split highway once wound through woods in the shadow of a stony bluff in Morgan County, now cranes rise taller than the treetops, hoisting huge steel casings and pipes as contractors work 24/7 to construct twin bridges spanning a massive landslide.

Catastrophe struck in February, when heavy rains led to the destruction of roughly 1,000-foot segments of both northbound and southbound US-231 on Brindlee Mountain. Investigation would later determine that the mountainside was moving due to a slide plane—where loose, muddy material slid atop solid rock—about 50 feet below the road surface.

ALDOT Deputy Materials & Tests Engineer Kaye Chancellor said landslides are common and occur in all parts of Alabama due to mixed geology and heavy rainfall. They are repaired with a variety of methods.

“In all the landslides I have worked in this state, none have compared to the magnitude and complexity of this one,” Chancellor said.

The closure in the early-morning hours of Feb. 13 created a major disruption, sending thousands of motorists on a 16-mile detour on two-lane roads poorly suited for high-volume traffic.

ALDOT’s traffic engineering personnel worked to optimize the detour routes for what would turn out to be months-long diversion. In addition to significant adjustments to timing of existing signals, temporary signals were installed at other intersections, and ALDOT took over maintenance of a county road used as a shortcut.

The day after the disaster, ALDOT engaged Reed Contracting to remove the pavement from the area. By the following week, several Materials & Tests drill crews were on site daily, boring and coring to gather as much information as possible.

By the end of March, they had performed four test pit excavations and 29 test borings, including installation of instruments such as inclinometers to study the depth and direction of movement and piezometers to track the level of the groundwater. They continued to work around the repair process, going on to perform another 30 borings.

“The geotechnical data collection and analysis alone usually takes several months for a project of this magnitude,” said Robert Thompson,



Part of the excavation and construction process to fix this portion of US-231.

senior principal engineer for geotechnical consultant Dan Brown and Associates.

“However, for this project, we had to quickly make reasonable judgments based on very limited initial data and start running models while we continued to collect data and install more instruments.”

Various potential fixes were explored, but the final decision came down to two basic solutions—anchored walls or bridges.

“Economic factors were always considered, but the priority was finding the best balance between the most robust “fix” to avoid future landslides and reducing the time the road was closed to complete the repairs,” Thompson said.

Ultimately, bridging the roadways separately was determined to be the safest and most time-efficient answer, while also being the most cost-effective.

The bridges were designed and developed in-house by Bridge Bureau over a period of about five weeks. Bureau Chief Tim Colquett said ALDOT has bridged unstable ground before, including bridges over sinkholes in the Birmingham area, but the US-231 bridge plans incorporate some unique features.

“Due to the active nature of the slide and the tremendous forces it would generate on the foundations, 9½-foot diameter shafts using structural pipe reinforcement, a first for ALDOT, embedded in bedrock and capped off with a grade beam at each abutment and bent location, were necessary to resist these forces and provide a stable footing for the bridge,” Colquett said.

While the bridge project was developed and prepared for bidding, ALDOT hired Reed to proceed with the first phase of repair by removing colluvium—loose rock and soil—to reduce the overburden on the slide as well as the depth to solid rock. In just over two months, the contractor excavated about 220,000 cubic yards of material, enough to fill more than 65 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

To advance to the bridge construction phase as seamlessly as possible and avoid downtime for procurement of materials, ALDOT took the extraordinary step of ordering in advance \$4.2 million worth of materials that required time for custom fabrication—including bridge girders, steel casings, reinforcing pipe and bearing pads.

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Stable Solution, Continued

In May, Brasfield & Gorrie of Birmingham won the bridge contract with a low bid of \$14.6 million—more than \$5.6 million less than the next-lowest of the five bidders.

The contractor will be eligible to receive a payment of \$50,000 for every day the project is complete prior to Dec. 2, up to a maximum of 30 days, and a payment of \$33,000 for every day the project is complete prior to Nov. 2, up to a maximum of 30 days. The contract also stipulates a pay deduction of \$33,000 per day the project is not complete after Dec. 2, increasing to a deduction of \$50,000 per day after Jan. 1, 2021.

Juan Carlos Ospina, Brasfield and Gorrie vice president and operations manager, said the goal is to complete the project early enough to earn the maximum incentive of nearly \$2.5 million.

Construction began June 1. Within the first month, the contractor had completed more than

half of the 32 drilled shafts, each socketed about 15-feet deep in solid rock to form deep, stable foundations for the bridges.

Brasfield and Gorrie handled three past ALDOT emergency bridge projects, and Ospina said the approach to this project is the same. Large amounts of labor and equipment are dedicated to each available work area as soon as possible in order to meet time constraints.

That meant immediately mobilizing the drilled shafts subcontractor and preparing the site, which thunderstorms threatened to turn into a mud pit, by constructing weatherproof access roads and crane pads, ahead of the subcontractor's drill rigs. Then, multiple concrete crews had to be mobilized to form and pour the substructure as soon as each pair of drilled shafts in a bent was completed.

"The entire project was scheduled to the fraction of a day, and any construction issue requires daily updates to our schedule," Ospina said.

During a public meeting April 12 in Arab, Transportation Director John Cooper and North Region Engineer Curtis Vincent offered assurances to concerned citizens that US-231 would be reopened for travel—safely and permanently—as soon as possible with respect to the magnitude of the problem. At the time, bridge construction was estimated to take about a year. Now the target is about half that.

Vincent said the response to the catastrophe has required many moving parts, within and outside the Department, to come together.

"I'm extremely proud of the coordination between all the parties involved and the urgency to bring a project of this magnitude to fruition in such a short period of time," Vincent said.

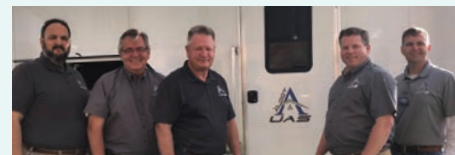
UAS Program Taking ALDOT to New Heights

A growing number of state departments of transportation are leveraging innovative drone technology to creatively improve safety, reduce traffic congestion and save money. ALDOT is helping lead the way in this new arena, thanks to its Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Program.

Originally developed for military purposes, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), or drones, have long been studied for their potential domestic applications, including use in the fields of agriculture, construction, law enforcement, search and rescue, storm damage and transportation. ALDOT's UAS Program, with the support and direction of the front office, was initiated in 2016 in the Data Collection and Data Management Group under the administration of J.D. D'Arville, along with the assistance of John Russell and Jonathan Woodham. Due to the demand for services, the UAS Section of the Data Collection and Data Management Group/Maintenance Bureau was created in January 2019 with J.D. D'Arville serving as the UAS Program Administrator and Jonathan Woodham as the UAS Manager. Mike Kyser, Senior Pilot, Casey Asher, Pilot, and Steve Brantley, Technician and Darryl Spears, UAS Data Manager, came on board shortly thereafter.

The UAS Section is responsible for all UAS Flight Operations for ALDOT throughout the State. Current and future applications of this exciting technology include photography, earthwork volume assessment, construction site progress monitoring, emergency disaster situations, vegetation awareness/eradication, bridge and structure inspections. ALDOT also uses drones for traffic pattern analysis to improve roadway safety, monitor rockslide threats, artificial intelligence (AI) to locate and quantify roadway assets and mobile data integration with GIS. ALDOT has used UAS to create "3D Reality Meshes" from NADIR/Oblique imagery of an area flown with multiple aircraft and flights. That data is then processed to create a three-dimensional model that can be used for planning, preliminary design, public involvement, etc. The program is also considering the addition of LIDAR capabilities in the future, providing yet another tool in the toolbox.

ALDOT's UAS Program has also been flexible enough to be an asset to other state agencies as well, assisting ALEA with the most recent inauguration ceremony of Governor Kay Ivey, the search and recovery of a missing child in East Alabama earlier this year and surveying damages along state right of ways created by storms/



From left to right: Steve Bradley, Mike Kyser, J.D. D'Arville, Jonathan Woodham, Casey Asher. Not pictured: Darryl Spears

inclement weather. The program is currently working with the Guntersville Area to assist in the bridge inspection process.

The UAS team has flown well over 1000 missions and filmed almost 300 miles of video. They have proven to be a valuable asset on numerous projects throughout the state, by providing safe, cost effective, and accurate deliverables that can help avoid unnecessary project delays. UAS technology presents itself as an important safety tool as well, there have been many occasions where a UAV is able to get needed information/data without putting a worker in a potentially dangerous situation or impacting the environment.

While the UAS Program is still in its infancy, emerging technologies will continue to increase its importance to ALDOT's processes and mission. For this group, the sky is the limit.

Posey Brings Work Zone Safety to Life



The advertisement used to promote work zone safety, featuring Charlie Posey & his family.

Engineering assistant Charlie Posey was working with a statewide survey crew near his Montgomery home base on Oct. 31, 2017, when an impaired driver hit and injured him.

This year Posey and his wife, Brittney, and daughter, Isabella, joined the Drive Safe Alabama traffic safety program for National Work Zone Awareness Week to compel drivers to drive alert in work zones. As the central figures on a billboard that appeared around the state and on posters distributed to ALDOT offices and rest areas, Charlie and his family brought the need for work zone safety to life.

"Having Charlie and his family as the centerpiece of this year's work zone safety campaign allowed ALDOT to put a face on work zone safety," said Drive Safe Alabama coordinator Allison Green. "Seeing their smiling faces reminds drivers to be careful around work zones because lives are at

stake. Through the campaign we also celebrate that Charlie is here today to be part of his daughter's life."

Hundreds of thousands of people across Alabama saw the work zone safety campaign message—Father. Crash Survivor. Drive Alert in Work Zones.

The work zone crash that injured Charlie also injured Chris Andress and killed Leo Fournier, ALDOT employees working on the same survey crew. The driver who hit them pled guilty to assault and reckless manslaughter and was sentenced to serve 20 years in prison.

In 2018, there were 3,810 work zone crashes in Alabama, resulting in 34 fatalities and 1,155 injuries. This is an increase compared to 2017, when there were 3,158 work zone crashes, resulting in 31 fatalities and 963 injuries. In the United States, 754 people died in roadway work zone crashes in 2018.

Supervisor Recognized with Patriot Award

Daniel Smith, TT Sr. in the East Central Region, was honored with the Employers Support of the Guard and Reserve's Patriot Award. An employee serving in the National Guard or Reserve may nominate individual supervisors for support they provided directly to the service member and his or her family. Smith was nominated by his employee Stephen Meadow, CEG in the East Central Region.

The Patriot Award recognizes the efforts made by individual supervisors to support Reservists or Guardsmen through measures including flexible schedules, time off prior to and after deployment, caring for families and granting leaves of absence if needed.

The award was presented to Smith on January 22 at the Alexander City Office. Presiding over the presentation was Maj. Gen. Crayton Bowen. He served as Adjutant General of the Alabama National Guard from 2003 to 2006.

ALDOT employs and relies heavily on Guard and Reserve Service members. Employer support, such as the support Smith gave Meadow and his family, enhances the retention rates in the Armed Forces and, in the end, strengthens national security. Servicemen like Meadow could not defend and protect America without the continued promise of meaningful and promised employment. The Employers Support of the Guard and Reserve is a program of the Department of Defense.



Pictured from left to right, Major General Crayton Bowen, Retired with Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve and Daniel Smith, TT Sr. & Project Manger in the East Central Region.



Hamilton Crew Saves Time & Money with Repair



Easter Sunday is supposed to be a day of rejoicing and religious celebration, but for many in Walker County, that day quickly turned to fear as meteorologists warned of tornadoes and flooding.

Two lines of 96-inch diameter corrugated metal pipe failed and the torrential rain completely washed out Mandy Williams Road in east Walker County, a county road that rests about 10 minutes from Arkadelphia, and left families trapped on a dead-end road, including an 84-year-old cancer patient.

Representative Connie Rowe contacted ALDOT the next morning and asked if the department could do the work and how long it might take. Region Engineer James Brown called Hamilton District Administrator Wes Spiller and asked if it was a job his crew could handle.

Spiller knew his 20-person crew was up for the task, but it wouldn't be easy. They immediately began mobilizing equipment and got permission to proceed Tuesday afternoon. By Wednesday morning, the crew had amassed three excavators, two dozers, 12 dump trucks, two fuel trucks, one 53-inch lowboy, a mechanic service truck and a skid steer.

While site personnel worked on the road, office personnel in Hamilton were contacting vendors and setting up project numbers. The crew excavated 4,800 cubic yards of material and hauled stone with 10 tandem dump tracks and two tri-axle dump trucks. The trucks averaged 1,300 tons of stone per day from the quarry to the jobsite.

By Thursday, the crew had moved most of the unclassified excavation and began cleaning the flowline of the running creek. They ran into an issue with the flowline since there wasn't a solid bottom to the creek and they can't lay pipe on unsuitable material. So, they adjusted the plan and constructed a rock floor for the foundation. Doing so set them back almost half a day after excavating muck then backfilling it with riprap to bridge over the area, but they got the job done.

They then began the difficult task of laying 400-linear feet of 72-inch pipe. Each pipe had to be individually transported and placed into the 100' x 80' x 30' deep void before being banded by hand. By late Thursday afternoon, over half of the pipe had been placed and backfilled.

On Friday, the crew still had to place 100-feet of the pipe and fill the immense void to the other side. They had been stockpiling near the site to expedite the stone fill. The crew was placed 2,500 tons of rock for the crossing that afternoon, and by 4:30 p.m., the first vehicle crossed the newly formed road.

"Our district crew did an outstanding job," Spiller said. "They worked 16-hour days and pushed until we got the job done. I can't say enough about how proud I am of every single person. This required a full effort from everyone, and they pulled it off. I'm thankful I get to work with these great people."

Below are the names of individuals who contributed to the success of the project:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Keith Armstrong</i> | <i>Chris Franks</i> | <i>Jeff Lawrence</i> | <i>Phillip Pugh</i> |
| <i>Joel Bowling</i> | <i>Rob Gann</i> | <i>Cordale Marchbanks</i> | <i>Jimmy Robertson</i> |
| <i>Trey Brewer</i> | <i>Daniel Gattis</i> | <i>Eric Nails</i> | <i>Justin Rye</i> |
| <i>Brandon Cantrell</i> | <i>Steve Gunter</i> | <i>Kenny Nichols</i> | <i>Caitlyn Spann</i> |
| <i>Reggie Casey</i> | <i>Derrell Heath</i> | <i>Scottie Owen</i> | <i>Wes Spiller</i> |
| <i>Jean Chandler</i> | <i>Pam Holcombe</i> | <i>Matt Palmer</i> | <i>Andrew Taylor</i> |
| <i>Shane Cook</i> | <i>Jason Hosch</i> | <i>Jonathan Parker</i> | <i>Andy Tucker</i> |
| <i>Steve Davis</i> | <i>Jason Huggins</i> | <i>Perry Peoples</i> | <i>Lisa Voegele</i> |
| <i>Ritchie Emerson</i> | <i>Mark Latham</i> | <i>Israel Price</i> | <i>Bo Williams</i> |



Rebuild Alabama's I-565 Expansion Underway

Increased revenue from the Rebuild Alabama Act is already at work in North Alabama, helping to expand a critical commuter and commercial link.

A project to add lanes and resurface I-565 between Exit 1 (Interstate 65) and Exit 7 (County Line Road) in Limestone County began June 14. It is the first major project funded by Rebuild Alabama's initial 6-cent gas tax increase, which took effect Sept. 1, 2019, and is anticipated to generate about \$120 million per year in additional funding for state roads, mostly for capacity improvements.

Addressing daily congestion on I-565 due to population growth and industrial development in the Huntsville area has been a top priority for ALDOT North Region in recent years. The interstate spur carries more than

60,000 vehicles daily on the four-lane segment between I-65 in Decatur and Wall Triana Highway in Madison. However, the estimated cost of widening that nine-mile stretch, which would also require modifying or replacing multiple bridges, was about \$140 million.

With routine maintenance resurfacing of the interstate on the horizon, North Region Engineer Curtis Vincent proposed boosting capacity at minimal extra cost by repurposing 14-foot wide inside shoulders to paved additional lanes. Though some full-depth widening will be necessary in sections without the wide shoulders, the project will six-lane and resurface the first seven miles of the corridor at a construction cost of just \$14.3 million.

The deadline for completion by Reed Contracting is Dec. 17, 2021. The contract includes up to \$1.25 million in incentives for early completion, aimed at preventing the project from extending into a third construction season.

While this project is just beginning, another project in the area is wrapping up. In a separate contract with Reed Contracting, ALDOT made \$10.3 million in modifications to the eastbound ramps at Exit 3 (Greenbrier Road) to improve safety and traffic flow. The interchange was modified in anticipation of increased truck traffic due to the Mazda Toyota Manufacturing facility, a giant automotive plant slated to begin production in 2021, and other industrial development along Greenbrier Parkway.



Pictured above is part of the I-565 expansion project.



Southeast Region Focuses on Major Construction Projects

The Southeast Region is continuing a long-awaited expansion project on a major road in Dothan and preparing to let a bridge bundling project on I-85 in Opelika.

On January 6, 2020, the second phase of the Ross Clark Circle expansion project began.

The second phase of the expansion project consists of installing additional lanes on Ross Clark Circle from south of US-84 to south of Meadowbrooke Drive and US-84 from Bel Aire Drive to North Englewood Avenue. As part of this phase, a triple left turn from Ross Clark Circle onto US-84 West will also be installed to move more traffic, more efficiently off the Ross Clark Circle mainline onto US-84.

The first phase of the project added additional lanes to Ross Clark Circle from south of the intersection of Bauman Drive to south of the intersection of US-84. This phase is expected to complete by Fall 2020 after new signals are

installed and final wearing layer and striping are in place.

ALDOT awarded Phase II of the project to Midsouth Paving, Inc., out of Birmingham at a cost of \$16.2 million.

In the Fall of 2019 ALDOT was awarded a \$10.8 million grant through the USDOT Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP). The USDOT grant will help replace six functionally obsolete bridges in Opelika along I-85 at exit 60 with new, modern bridges with full width shoulders for added safety and traffic congestion relief. Acceleration lanes from exit 60 will also be extended to allow traffic to more safely merge onto I-85. The project is expected to let in December 2020 with an estimated construction time of two years.

Alabama was one of only 18 states to receive “a CHBP grant. ALDOT completed an in-depth grant application that met USDOT selection



criteria requirements, including innovation, support for economic vitality and project readiness.

To maximize safety and reduce the project’s impact on motorists, ALDOT is using an innovative method that will allow two travel lanes in both directions to remain open during construction. By using the existing median as a temporary travel lane, each bridge can be replaced in its current location.



Development Plans for CityWalkBHAM

CityWalkBHAM (CityWalk) is a public space design project currently underway in Birmingham. CityWalk is comprised of 10-blocks (approximately one mile in length, and 31-acres in size) beneath I-59/20, which runs through the heart of Downtown Birmingham. Construction crews recently completed work on the infrastructure project which razed the dated I-59/20 bridge structure and replaced it with a sleek new modern bridge that will soon serve as a canopy for the CityWalk project.

The I-59/20 bridges were completely closed to traffic for replacement in January of 2019 and have since been re-opened to the public. Since their construction in 1971, the overhead interstate has served as a thoroughfare through the Birmingham Central Business

District and immediately adjacent to the ever-growing Birmingham Jefferson Convention Complex (BJCC). Through a robust Public Involvement process and conceptual planning effort, ALDOT alongside the Barge Design

Solutions, Inc. design team, BJCC and the City of Birmingham, are now engaged in an initiative to transform the space adjacent to and underneath the I-59/20 corridor. The transformation will convert parking and



A rendering of what will soon be beneath I-59/20 in downtown Birmingham.



Alabama's First Diverging Diamond Interchange

ALDOT opened Alabama's first Diverging Diamond Interchange at SR-181/I-10 in Baldwin County on July 1. The project was awarded to Arrington Curb and Excavation Inc. and began in March 2019. This much needed project will aid in the relief of the frequent congestion this currently conventional diamond interchange experiences due to the heavy volume of traffic and signalized left turns onto the interstate.

This interchange sits just south of a popular shopping center, eateries, businesses, schools and commercial developments. More than 47,000 vehicles travel the interchange daily which is comprised of local commuter traffic as well as year-round tourist traffic. The Diverging Diamond design will increase the safety and

efficiency of the interchange by eliminating left-hand turns against free-flowing traffic, reducing the number of signal phases, and by reducing the number of conflict points by over half.

In order to navigate the interchange, motorists on SR-181 will proceed through the first traffic signal and follow their lane to the opposite side of the road. Traffic accessing I-10 will turn left onto the ramp. Through traffic will continue to the second traffic signal and follow their lane back to the right side of the road. Traffic on I-10 will access existing ramps to enter SR-181.

In addition to using traditional direct mailers and T.V. and radio advertising, the Southwest Region created a project Facebook page in order to educate the public about



the interchange and inform locals of lane closures and traffic pattern shifts. The page, called Eastern Shore Diverging Diamond Interchange, has been a useful tool in preparing motorists for safely navigating this new type of interchange as it hosts two navigational tutorial videos, a FAQ

sheet, and allows the department to promptly address citizen questions or concerns directly through the comment and messaging features.

Constructing the interchange came with the challenges of working under live traffic, as well as a few weather and utility delays.

underutilized space to a vibrant urban space for public use and activities.

Branded as CityWalkBHAM (citywalkbham.com), the long-term project goal is to develop high-level design and pedestrian amenities which will provide both active and passive recreational use opportunities.

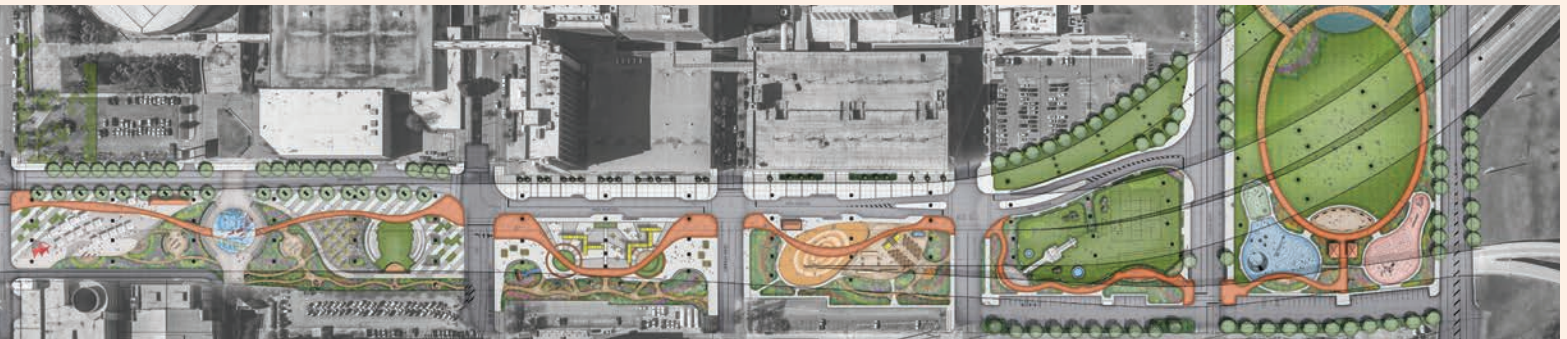
Public input meetings, a project dedicated webpage, social media outlet via Facebook, and additional outreach at neighborhood community

meetings are a few of the methods of engagement which were conducted. The design of this unique space under the bridge will respond to the input received from the community.

CityWalk will include design elements such as a skate park, water feature, sports and recreation areas, gathering spaces, stages, space for special events and food trucks, a dog park, and a destination playground for all to enjoy. Poised to be one of Birmingham's most vibrant public

spaces, CityWalk will create a unique community space full of programmatic elements and activities which will enliven and strengthen the space.

CityWalk is currently in the construction drawing development phase, with an ultimate target construction end date of Summer 2022, which is when Birmingham is set to host the World Games.





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Parting Shot

A breathtaking view of Little River Canyon National Preserve with the Little River Canyon bridge on SR-35 in the background connecting Cherokee and DeKalb counties. When this bridge opened in August of 2010, it was the first of its kind in the state. The intent was to integrate the bridge design into the natural terrain of the surrounding preserve.

With a driving surface 53 feet above the riverbed, the bridge is 465 feet long. It has only one pier set in the middle of the streambed, which causes the least possible amount of impact to the natural flow of the river. Support beams and rebar were manufactured using recycled steel, and recycled asphalt was used to pave the driving surface. The bridge has a fully-developed pedestrian lane featuring three viewing areas with benches overlooking the scenic Little River Canyon and falls. Another unique aspect of the bridge is its 11,800 square feet of simulated stone masonry, adding overall artistic value and visual appeal. It's one of the most innovative projects ever undertaken by ALDOT.

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