Bridges Across Georgia

Addition By Subtraction: The Peachtree Road Restriping

Driving Behavior: It’s A Choice

MilePosts Performance Measures
Invest in safety for Georgians and Georgia DOT employees. Tracks fatalities and injuries on Georgia’s roads.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURE</th>
<th>TARGET</th>
<th>Q1 JULY-SEP 2017</th>
<th>Q2 OCT-DEC 2017</th>
<th>Q3 JAN-MARCH 2018</th>
<th>Q4 APR-JUNE 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of fatalities statewide</td>
<td>Reduce fatalities by 41 each year</td>
<td>376</td>
<td>362</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work zone fatalities for Georgia DOT employees</td>
<td>Toward zero deaths</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work zone injuries for Georgia DOT employees requiring medical treatment</td>
<td>Toward zero injuries</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work zone fatalities for the public</td>
<td>Toward zero deaths</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average HERO response time</td>
<td>10 minutes or less</td>
<td>11 minutes</td>
<td>11 minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Office of Performance-Based Management & Research
One Georgia Center 600 West Peachtree St. NW Atlanta, GA 30308 Phone: 404.631.1743 www.dot.ga.gov

MILEPOSTS

FY 2018 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

SETTING GOALS

Goals are crucial to the success of organizations like the Georgia Department of Transportation. At Georgia DOT, we align and measure our performance with our goals and objectives. Each goal relates to and supports the state’s strategic priorities.

DATA DRIVES PERFORMANCE

Performance management enables us to accomplish our mission of providing a safe and well-maintained transportation system for the people of Georgia. Harnessing and measuring data enables Georgia DOT to make decisions, adjustments and improvements that lead to fulfilling this mission.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Georgia DOT’s many performance measures - known as MilePosts - help us understand how we are doing and where we need to improve. They cover hundreds of key measures from average highway speeds to pavement conditions, the state of our bridges to average Highway Emergency Response Operator (HERO) response time, the number of fatalities on our roads to percentage of projects completed on time and on budget.

MISSION AND GOALS

Georgia DOT’s mission is to deliver a transportation system focused on innovation, safety, sustainability and mobility. This mission translates into five strategic goals relating to: safety, system preservation, project delivery, mobility and employees.

FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

- Invest in safety for Georgians and Georgia DOT employees
- Efficiently take care of what we have
- Deliver projects on time and on budget
- Invest to improve reliability, congestion and connectivity
- Recruit, train and retain a quality workforce

Each quarter, we will share a few of these MilePosts to demonstrate how we’re measuring up.

TOWARD ACHIEVING RESULTS

- Georgia DOT makes ongoing infrastructure investments designed to enhance safety. These include use of data and analytics to identify systemic safety projects such as improved pavement markings, cable barrier installations and rumble strips. Non-systemic projects in targeted locations include restricted-crossing U-turns (R-Cuts) and roundabouts. Road safety audits, where engineers walk a road to identify potential safety deficiencies, are also conducted.
- In 2017 about $100 million was invested in infrastructure safety projects, including $14 million in off-system safety.
- Georgia DOT has several marketing safety campaigns including:
  - Drive Alert Arrive Alive, which educates drivers about how changes in their driving behavior can reduce preventable crashes and save lives. Since 2015 the Office of Strategic Communications has conducted outreach to combat distracted driving. The campaign relaunches in April 2018 with new creative and visual content.
  - See & Be Seen addresses a surge in pedestrian fatalities.
  - National Work Zone Awareness Week is observed each spring to call public attention to the dangers in roadway work zones.
  - Safety On My Mind is Georgia DOT’s employee-focused initiative that inspires a safety-first culture among staff.

© 2018 Georgia Department of Transportation
**SYSTEM PERFORMANCE**

Invest to improve reliability, congestion and connectivity.

Tracks average speeds across the most congested freeways in the metro Atlanta region.

**TOWARD ACHIEVING RESULTS**

- Georgia DOT’s Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP) is an initial list of 11 large-scale transportation projects that will improve mobility, and increase travel capacity, reliability and safety; help move freight more efficiently and provide economic benefits. Once complete, it is expected that in the year 2030 there will be a five percent reduction in traffic congestion statewide.

- Georgia Express Lanes (GEL) provide a mobility choice for drivers to pay a toll to bypass congestion and offer a clear path for transit operators. GEL relies on variable-price tolling to maintain free-flowing travel. The result is more reliable and predictable trip times - even during peak travel periods.

- Incident management that facilitates efficient, safe and fast roadway clearance reduces the impact of crashes on motorists. In metro Atlanta, a primary mission of the HERO program is to clear disabled vehicles from the roadway to restore normal traffic flow.

- The TIME Task Force Towing and Recovery Incentive Program (TRIP) encourages time-proven practices to resolve large-scale commercial vehicle incidents. By paying performance incentives to highly skilled, TRIP-certified towing and recovery companies, delays and safety hazards are reduced.

**TOWARD ACHIEVING RESULTS**

- As a result of the Transportation Funding Act of 2015, Georgia DOT now has sustained funding to focus on deferred routine maintenance including pavement preservation and bridge rehabilitation or replacement of on-and-off system bridges. TFA returned the department to a 15-year capital maintenance cycle, allowing for preventative maintenance in between.

- The FY 18 GDOT investment in routine maintenance is $447 million; capital maintenance is $400 million; and repairing and replacing bridges is $301 million. This is more than double the investment before TFA.
Russell R. McMurry, P.E.

Please enjoy this issue!

Thus far, 2018 has had its successes and losses, but I feel it is full of great promise for Georgia. Let’s all keep working hard to improve the lives of all Georgians.

I am further saddened by yet another tragedy. In February, C.W. Matthews team member Lamar Ragland died from injuries he received when he was hit by a motorist in a work zone on I-85 North in Gwinnett County. We can’t stay home. Let us all be proud of Carey’s dedication and commitment to women who work hard in less than ideal conditions when we tell others about how Georgia’s transportation infrastructure and long-term transportation plans will play a key role in keeping Georgia the number one state for business. I hope you will read this and all of our blog posts on Georgia DOT’s website.

This Milepost often showcases Georgia DOT’s finest projects and initiatives. However, for me, highlighting our great team members is what I enjoy! This issue is choke full of accolades for our GDOT team.

Congratulations to our State Transportation Board Members Ann Purcell, Stacey Key, Emily Dunn and Dana Lemon, and GDOT team members Meg Pikkle, Hiral Patel and Kimberly Nesbitt, named by Engineering Georgia magazine to its list of 100 Influential Women To Know. They each raise the profile of Georgia’s engineering industry and greatly contribute towards the Department’s fine work. I’m very proud to recognize these women; it’s also important to note that 22% of GDOT’s workforce are women.

This Milepost also acknowledges the recipients of GDOT’s 2017 Statewide Awards and Commissioner’s Merit and Achievement Awards. These remarkable individuals and teams are truly the best of the best and they exemplify what great people work at GDOT!

Earlier this year, I was humbled and honored to have been named Georgia Trend’s 2018 Georgian of the Year. As commissioner, I was recognized for the I-85 Bridge Rebuild. I often receive recognition for many of the Department’s achievements, but it is all of you that deserve the recognition. I accepted this award on behalf of all those involved from emergency response through the rebuild. This event highlighted all of our collective capabilities.

This issue of Milepost includes articles about how after much analysis, restriping and signalizing, improvements to Atlanta’s most famous road, Peachtree Road, are bringing safety and traffic flow benefits; Georgia’s bridge investments and ensuring safety through inspections; and how GDOT balances infrastructure’s state of good repair with mobility projects.

As part of GDOT’s focus on transparency and accountability, GDOT has launched a new blog - The Extra Mile. A recent post entitled Driving Economic Development, written by guest author Bert Branltney who is chief operating officer of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, looks at how Georgia’s transportation infrastructure and long-term transportation plans will play a key role in keeping Georgia the number one state for business. I hope you will read this and all of our blog posts on Georgia DOT’s website.

It is with a heavy heart that I want to honor Mr. Carey Ellerbee, assistant highway foreman of the Special Outfits crew in District 3. Carey tragically lost his life in the line of duty as he was returning from clearing snow and ice in Atlanta. Carey, a nearly 20-year employee of GDOT, was serving Georgians by working to make the roads passable. He is but one example of the men and women who work hard in less than ideal conditions when we tell others to stay home. Let us all be proud of Carey’s dedication and commitment to Georgia. His loss is deeply felt.

I am further saddened by yet another tragedy. In February, C.W. Matthews team member Larnell Ragland died from injuries he received when he was hit by a motorist in a work zone on I-85 North in Gwinnett County. We can’t stress enough to drivers the hazards in work zones and encourage them to slow down, pay strict attention and always watch for workers.

I also encourage all of you working on our roadways to keep “Safety On My Mind.”

As part of GDOT’s focus on transparency and accountability, GDOT has launched a new blog - The Extra Mile. A recent post entitled Driving Economic Development, written by guest author Bert Branltney who is chief operating officer of the Georgia Department of Economic Development, looks at how Georgia’s transportation infrastructure and long-term transportation plans will play a key role in keeping Georgia the number one state for business. I hope you will read this and all of our blog posts on Georgia DOT’s website.

It is with a heavy heart that I want to honor Mr. Carey Ellerbee, assistant highway foreman of the Special Outfits crew in District 3. Carey tragically lost his life in the line of duty as he was returning from clearing snow and ice in Atlanta. Carey, a nearly 20-year employee of GDOT, was serving Georgians by working to make the roads passable. He is but one example of the men and women who work hard in less than ideal conditions when we tell others to stay home. Let us all be proud of Carey’s dedication and commitment to Georgia. His loss is deeply felt.

I am further saddened by yet another tragedy. In February, C.W. Matthews team member Larnell Ragland died from injuries he received when he was hit by a motorist in a work zone on I-85 North in Gwinnett County. We can’t stress enough to drivers the hazards in work zones and encourage them to slow down, pay strict attention and always watch for workers. I also encourage all of you working on our roadways to keep “Safety On My Mind.”

Thus far, 2018 has had its successes and losses, but I feel it is full of great promise for Georgia. Let’s all keep working hard to improve the lives of all Georgians.

Please enjoy this issue!

Russell R. McMurry, P.E.
ACROSS THE BOARD

Tourism award a team effort
Commissioner Russell McMurry shared the Bill Hardman Sr. Tourism Champion Award/Government with the State Transportation Board, Chief Engineer Meg Pirkle and the men and women of GDOT. The award, presented at the Governor’s Tourism Conference, acknowledges extraordinary support of tourism in Georgia through legislative or organizational efforts. Recent welcome center and rest area renovations were funded through advertising revenue collected from the Board’s interstate exit sign Logo Program.

Influential Women to Know
State Transportation Board members (L-R) Ann Purcell (vice chairman), Stacey Key, Emily Dunn and Dana Lemon were named by Engineering Georgia to their list of “100 Influential Women to Know.” The list, in the January/February 2018 issue, recognizes women of character, integrity and purpose who are shaping Georgia’s engineering community. Visit http://bit.ly/100IWTK.

Board Members Recognized
Robert Brown received the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Georgia Chapter’s highest tribute. The 2017 Bernard B. Rothschild Award recognizes Brown’s commitment to civic leadership, education and mentorship. Brown also received the Georgia Historical Society (GHS) John Macphenon Berrien Award for his service to GHS and his lifetime of achievement in the field of Georgia history.
Mark Burkhalter was featured in the September/ October 2017 issue of James Magazine. The article — How One Lawmaker Paved the Path for Mercedes-Benz Stadium — is about his legislative efforts that contributed to making the new stadium a reality. Burkhalter served 18 years in the Georgia General Assembly prior to joining the Board in 2015.
Rudy Bowen received Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful’s highest honor. The 2017 Connie Wiggins Environmental Legacy Award acknowledges his role on the STB in initiating the Georgia Inmate Reentry Program to clean up state highways and for the “many unspoken efforts such as PeachCare for Kids, a sales tax holiday and the “Drugs Don’t Work” program. Always looked at my job as doing two things — protecting the interests of my district and improving the state through pro-active, progressive legislation. I always did it in an effort to help local economies, businesses and citizens of Georgia.

Carrying on the legacy. After losing both his mother and his best friend, Jay Shaw, in the same week, Golden says April 20 is a day he will never forget. Jay had just been re-elected to the Board when he passed away. He was like a brother to me. Jay’s son, Rep. Jason Shaw, asked me to consider running for the position in his dad’s honor. I can’t express what an honor it is to have been elected by the legislature to serve on this Board.

American’s pastime. Father/son bonding time is special, and for Golden it revolved around America’s favorite sport – baseball. It was a sad day when I took the batting cage down in my backyard. Some of my favorite memories are sitting with my son, drinking Gatorade with sugar dripping off us after throwing 100 to 200 balls and just talking about life. I miss it. Baseball is a special sport with a special place in my heart.

Thinking differently. Autism is a unique diagnosis and those affected often see the world in a different light. Visiting the Marcus Autism Center had such an impact on me. It inspired me to sponsor my final piece of legislation, SB 397, a bill requiring health insurance policies in Georgia to cover behavioral therapy for children under 21 and diagnosed with autism. One in 68 children is affected. Watching those children and their parents and seeing what they go through — it was eye opening.

Is it luck? My wife, Ellen, is a wonderful mother to our son. She is a lawyer and now a Lowndes County State Court Judge. She has been with me through some tough campaigns, and she makes me proud when I look at her strength and her accomplishments. I am proud of my son, Seth, for his accomplishments on the field and in the classroom. And my trusted lab, “Doc Holliday” – I look at them and have a special place in my heart.

The 16-member State Transportation Board determines policy and generally governs the Georgia Department of Transportation. Each member is elected by a caucus of Georgia General Assembly members from their specific congressional district. Board members serve staggered, five-year terms.

By Brittany Wagner

From the ball field to the boardroom to the Capitol, Tim Golden is living his childhood dreams. He is an eternal student, with a thirst for knowledge and a bookshelf of captivating stories. Elected to the State Transportation Board in 2013 to serve Congressional District 8, Golden is a team player whose life experiences guide his decisions as secretary of the Board, a position he is grateful to have.

The gem of South Georgia. Golden spent the first 11 years of his life in Savannah, but Valdosta is home. I have lived in Valdosta for more than 50 years. It’s a progressive community – one I never would have imagined I would get the honor to represent. I grew up playing baseball here and so did my son. It’s an incredible place.

A history of studying history. He majored in history and political science, two passions he uses for the betterment of Georgia. My mother had a passion for history. Spending my childhood in Savannah, a city full of history, I suppose it rubbed off. Looking at my nightstand, if you don’t see a book on investments, you will see a book on history.

State Transportation Board Secretary
At Bat With Tim Golden

By Brittany Wagner

Unique to Georgia. GDOT’s State Transportation Board was established in 1966 during Gov. Carl Sanders’ time in office. It’s a unique thing we’ve got with the Board. It provides a series of checks and balances and holds everyone accountable. It was an effort to get the politics out of transportation and I think it works. We’ve got a good thing going.

Health care, education and business. His love of politics led him to serve 24 years in the Georgia General Assembly championing efforts such as PeachCare for Kids, a sales tax holiday and the “Drugs Don’t Work” program. I always looked at my job as doing two things — protecting the interests of my district and improving the state through pro-active, progressive legislation. I always did it in an effort to help local economies, businesses and citizens of Georgia.

Carrying on the legacy. After losing both his mother and his best friend, Jay Shaw, in the same week, Golden says April 20 is a day he will never forget. Jay had just been re-elected to the Board when he passed away. He was like a brother to me. Jay’s son, Rep. Jason Shaw, asked me to consider running for the position in his dad’s honor. I can’t express what an honor it is to have been elected by the legislature to serve on this Board.

American’s pastime. Father/son bonding time is special, and for Golden it revolved around America’s favorite sport – baseball. It was a sad day when I took the batting cage down in my backyard. Some of my favorite memories are sitting with my son, drinking Gatorade with sugar dripping off us after throwing 100 to 200 balls and just talking about life. I miss it. Baseball is a special sport with a special place in my heart.

Thinking differently. Autism is a unique diagnosis and those affected often see the world in a different light. Visiting the Marcus Autism Center had such an impact on me. It inspired me to sponsor my final piece of legislation, SB 397, a bill requiring health insurance policies in Georgia to cover behavioral therapy for children under 21 and diagnosed with autism. One in 68 children is affected. Watching those children and their parents and seeing what they go through — it was eye opening.

Is it luck? My wife, Ellen, is a wonderful mother to our son. She is a lawyer and now a Lowndes County State Court Judge. She has been with me through some tough campaigns, and she makes me proud when I look at her strength and her accomplishments. I am proud of my son, Seth, for his accomplishments on the field and in the classroom. And my trusted lab, “Doc Holliday” – I look at them and think, how did I have such luck!
George Mason University.

industrial engineering from North Carolina State University and

on national safety committees. Morales has a bachelor’s in

Association of Transportation Safety & Health Officials and serves

Development Program. He attended Griffin Technical College.

He completed GDOT’s Management Development Program (MDP).

Sharon Morales

was Georgia DOT’s new state

safety manager. Morales has over 25 years of

experience overseeing building and

equipment maintenance operations, as well as

specifying and purchasing. Stone completed GDOT’s Management

Development Program. He attended Griffin Technical College.

Jeff Stone

is the new administrator of the

Office of Equipment Management (OEM). Stone joined GDOT in 2000 as a

Maintenance Shop manager and has a wealth of experience overseeing building and

equipment maintenance operations, as well as

specifying and purchasing. Stone completed GDOT’s Management

Development Program. He attended Griffin Technical College.

Recognition & Distinctions

The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) of Georgia and Georgia DOT announced the winners of its Georgia Partnership for Transportation Quality (GPTQ) Preconstruction Design Awards at the 2017 Georgia Transportation Summit. The awards recognize engineering teams and firms for exemplary work, innovation and ingenuity in transportation and infrastructure projects in Georgia. The Grand Award went to GDOT’s Office of Roadway Design for the new Continuous Flow Intersection at SR 400 at SR 53 in Dawson County. The project reconstructed an existing at-grade intersection into an innovative, two-legged CFI, a first in Georgia, and implemented only a handful of times across the country: Kimberly Nesbitt, Charles Robinson, Fletcher Miller, David Acree, Y-Thao Truong, Andy Casey.

Other GDOT ACEC winners:

- Reconstructition of I-16/I-75 Interchange in Bibb County; Category: Context Sensitive Planning and Design including Public Participation Plan; Clinton Ford, Eric Duff, Chad Carlson, Karlene Barron, Amber Phillips.
- Gulfstream Road at Robert B. Miller Road including Roundabouts; Category: Traffic Safety and/or Intersection Design; Brent Moseley.
- SR 96 Widening (Peach/Houston counties); Category: Highway Design/Urban; Vinessa Pogram, Clinton Ford, Krystal Stovall-Dixon.
- US 1/SR 17 Martin Bypass (Stephens County); Category: Highway Design/Rural; Brent Cook, Brandon Kirby
- I-75 South Metro Express Lanes from SR 155 to SR 138 (Henry/Clayton counties); Category: Design-Build; Andrew Hoenig, Darryl VanMeter

The Office of Traffic Operations received the Intelligent Transportation Society (ITS) of Georgia Larry R. Dreihaupt Award for demonstrating how ITS principles and technology can be applied in the face of significant operational events - from the I-85 bridge collapse to Hurricane Irma evacuations. Brad Mann, Mark Demidovich and Alan Davis accepted the award for the Traffic Ops team.

Commissioner Russell McMurry was named Georgia Trend’s 2018 Georgian of the Year in recognition of his “leadership in handling an emergency and addressing the transportation challenges of a growing state.” In a memo to employees, the Commissioner acknowledged that GDOT’s triumphs—large and small—are the result of “a total team effort.” He shared the award with employees for their “passion and ongoing commitment” to the people of Georgia. See the article at http://bit.ly/2018GOTY.

"100 Influential Women to Know." They are (L-R) Chief Engineer Meg Pirkle, Engineering Director Hiral Patel and Program Delivery Administrator Kimberly Nesbitt. The list, in the January/Feb. 2018 issue, “provides a glimpse into the diverse, strong and growing number of women helping to shape Georgia’s engineering community.” Visit http://bit.ly/100WTX.

Georgia DOT was named 2018 Owner of the Year by ENR Southeast, a regional publication of the Engineering News-Record. ENR recognized GDOT’s “notable steps in adopting alternative project-delivery methods” including design-build and public-private partnerships. ENR also noted GDOT’s rapid rebuild of the I-85 Bridge in 2017.

Bridge Liaison Engineer Mike Garner and Construction Liaison Jeremy Daniel received the Atlanta Regional Commission’s new Unsung Hero Award, created to recognize individuals who work quietly and effectively to improve the quality of life in the Atlanta region. They were acknowledged for their critical on-site work and dedication to the I-85 rebuild project.

The Office of Strategic Communications received the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Georgia Chapter 2017 Phoenix Award for Crisis Communications in Government for communications efforts during the I-85 collapse and rebuild.

The Office of Transportation Data (OTD) was a joint recipient of the 2017 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for efforts with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act of 2012 (MAP-21). The award recognizes creative approaches to advancing regional community and economic development and improved quality of life. The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions and the Carl Vinson Institute of Georgia shared in the award.

Two GDOT projects won 2017 Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) Achievement Awards. River Watch Parkway Improvements won in Transportation Sector/ Construction - value less than $10 million. Transportation Investment Act/Band One won in Transportation Sector/ Construction - value greater than $60 million.

In Case You Missed It (ICYMI)

Georgia named #1 state in which to do business (again). It’s the fifth consecutive year that Site Selection Magazine has ranked Georgia number one. Visit http://bit.ly/1STDBUS.

www.dot.ga.gov

4

www.dot.ga.gov

Winter 2018  Georgia Milepost

5

"100 Influential Women to Know." They are (L-R) Chief Engineer Meg Pirkle, Engineering Director Hiral Patel and Program Delivery Administrator Kimberly Nesbitt. The list, in the January/Feb. 2018 issue, “provides a glimpse into the diverse, strong and growing number of women helping to shape Georgia’s engineering community.” Visit http://bit.ly/100WTX.

Georgia DOT was named 2018 Owner of the Year by ENR Southeast, a regional publication of the Engineering News-Record. ENR recognized GDOT’s “notable steps in adopting alternative project-delivery methods” including design-build and public-private partnerships. ENR also noted GDOT’s rapid rebuild of the I-85 Bridge in 2017.

Bridge Liaison Engineer Mike Garner and Construction Liaison Jeremy Daniel received the Atlanta Regional Commission’s new Unsung Hero Award, created to recognize individuals who work quietly and effectively to improve the quality of life in the Atlanta region. They were acknowledged for their critical on-site work and dedication to the I-85 rebuild project.

The Office of Strategic Communications received the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Georgia Chapter 2017 Phoenix Award for Crisis Communications in Government for communications efforts during the I-85 collapse and rebuild.

The Office of Transportation Data (OTD) was a joint recipient of the 2017 Innovation Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for efforts with the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act of 2012 (MAP-21). The award recognizes creative approaches to advancing regional community and economic development and improved quality of life. The Georgia Association of Regional Commissions and the Carl Vinson Institute of Georgia shared in the award.

Two GDOT projects won 2017 Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) Achievement Awards. River Watch Parkway Improvements won in Transportation Sector/ Construction - value less than $10 million. Transportation Investment Act/Band One won in Transportation Sector/ Construction - value greater than $60 million.

In Case You Missed It (ICYMI)

Georgia named #1 state in which to do business (again). It’s the fifth consecutive year that Site Selection Magazine has ranked Georgia number one. Visit http://bit.ly/1STDBUS.


Hold the date.

2018, Sept. 20-24: Georgia DOT hosts American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Annual Meeting in Atlanta

2019, Aug. 18-20: Georgia DOT hosts Southern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) Annual Meeting in Savannah


USA Today reports that according to 24/7 Wall St, Georgia has the fifth best infrastructure ranking based on 2015 data on roads in poor condition, bridges classified as structurally deficient, and dams at high hazard risk. Visit http://bit.ly/5S5RBDI.

Accountability and Investment Report available. Georgia DOT is accountable for its actions, for the results we achieve and for disclosing those results clearly and transparently. See GDOT’s FY17 Accountability and Investment Report at http://bit.ly/GDOT2017AIR.

GDOT blog goes THE EXTRA MILE. As part of the Department’s goal for increased transparency, GDOT’s new blog — THE EXTRA MILE— features timely topics written by subject matter experts like GDOT’s Russel McMurry and Joe Carpenter and guest bloggers like Bert Brantley. It’s a must read for anyone who wants to keep up with what GDOT is doing to keep Georgians moving, to support the state’s economic growth and to help our communities thrive. Visit www.dot.ga.gov/TheExtraMile.

Need a piece of transportation information? At the USDOT National Transportation Library (NTL) you won’t find the latest best sellers. What you will find is a digital public access repository called ROSAP (Repository & Open Access Portal). ROSAP includes full-text electronic publications and datasets for USDOT-funded research. There is no charge to access. Visit http://bit.ly/2HLFksg.

Georgia DOT ranks as #5 best state for road, bridge and dam infrastructure.

http://bit.ly/100WTX.

While the nation faces an ongoing crisis in long-term federal funding for much-needed transportation investments, and the outcome of the Trump Administration’s Building a Stronger America initiative for rebuilding infrastructure is pending legislation, Georgia is in a desirable position. Despite a lack of federal appropriations, Georgia's Transportation Funding Act (TFA) of 2015 has enabled the state to advance over $500 million in projects. While slow federal appropriations have limited the positive effects of the TFA, Georgia's transportation system continues to benefit from the sustained funding it receives for routine road and bridge maintenance, as well as capital major investments.

The primary focus of funds resulting from the Transportation Funding Act is to maintain and improve Georgia's transportation infrastructure. Since TFA was enacted, the department has continued to address a backlog of needs like resurfacing roads, bridge replacements and repairs, and safety and operational improvements.

Georgia is the number one state in which to do business. Georgia DOT takes its responsibility for managing the nation's 10th-largest transportation network seriously, says DOT Commissioner Russell McMurry. "While often not exciting, maintenance projects are absolutely critical," McMurry explains. Transportation infrastructure drives Georgia's economy, supports community growth and helps us maintain our position as the number one state in which to do business. It makes Georgia attractive to prospective businesses like Amazon's second headquarters, as well as those in freight and logistics and our largest industry, agribusiness."

The goal, he adds, is to provide a balance of maintenance projects while simultaneously advancing projects that address congestion – now and in the future. Georgia Express Lanes expansion will create a connected system. Express Lanes rely on variable-price tolling to provide a choice for improved mobility and more reliable travel times for drivers and transit users. Building on the success of the reversible I-75 South Metro Express Lanes in Henry and Clayton counties, Georgia’s second reversible Express Lanes project—the Northwest Corridor in Cobb and Cherokee counties—is scheduled to open this summer with 30 miles of reversible Express Lanes on I-75 and I-575 northwest of Atlanta.

Express Lanes are also planned along I-285 and SR 400 through the Major Mobility Investment Program (MMIP), expected to have an immense impact in creating a safer, more connected, more mobile Georgia.

Freight mobility is critical for business. The widening of I-85 in Barrow, Gwinnett and Jackson counties—scheduled to break ground in 2018—is one of Georgia's first freight mobility projects and the first of 11 MMIP mega projects to do so. Due to an innovative best-value, variable-scope design-build procurement that encouraged competition to deliver the most lane miles of widening within an allowable maximum budget, the project gained four extra miles of capacity beyond its original design. In 2019, construction is expected to start on two other MMIP freight mobility projects: the widening of I-16 and the reconstruction of the I-16/I-95 interchange near Savannah.

Another capital construction includes a freight network expansion comprised of 45 non-interstate freight corridor projects, a $1.8 billion investment over the next 10 years, which is expected to deliver economic growth.

Georgia DOT has opportunities for service providers of all sizes to participate in a variety of transportation-related projects. Want to do business with Georgia DOT? Start here.

- Getting qualified: www.dot.ga.gov/IP5/Business
- Routine Maintenance: www.dot.ga.gov/RoutineMaint
- MMIP Program: www.dot.ga.gov/MMIP
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program: www.dot.ga.gov/DBE
- Small, Veteran, DBE (SVDBE) program / State Supported Program (SSSP) Business Help Center: http://gdotstateprojects.com

Subtracting one travel lane and replacing it with a left-turn lane adds up to benefits for drivers. "With over 900 crashes in the corridor during a five-year period, safety was the primary consideration," Georgia DOT State Traffic Engineer Andrew Heath said. "The goal is to drive that number down and turn lanes are an effective way to do that.

Removing left-turning vehicles from travel lanes provides significant safety and congestion reduction benefits. It cuts down on drivers weaving to get around someone who's stopped to make a left turn. The two-way left turn lane is not only a low-cost safety strategy that is effective in reducing the frequency of rear-end crashes involving a turning vehicle. It is also expected to result in about a three percent decrease in average travel time during the a.m. and p.m. driving peaks along Peachtree Road, Heath said.

When Commuter Dude Jerry Cames from WXIA-TV’s 11Alive tracked his commute northbound on Peachtree Road before the restriping and then in November after the temporary restriping was down, he saw a 16% reduction in travel time on the same stretch of road. See the clip at https://youtu.be/wso_i4chMkI.

As the project plan was developed, Georgia DOT conducted numerous meetings with the public, neighborhood and business groups and stakeholders to not only inform and educate them, but also to get their feedback and listen to their concerns. In fact, based on public comments, it was determined that bike lanes would not be included in the project. The partnership with the community resulted in the development of a project that enhances safety and improves traffic flow along this crucial corridor that connects Midtown Atlanta and Buckhead.

"GDOT Traffic Operations built one of the most robust micro-simulation models for the corridor that we ever have. It included actual turning movement counts, traffic signal timing and roadway geometry," Heath said. "It even accounted for MARTA ridership and how long a bus might stop at each stop off/pick up point. The effort put into the model led to public confidence in the proposed solution." While initial benefits were seen with temporary striping, now that the more visible permanent striping is down, dedicated left turn signals continue to be installed at key intersections, and as drivers become familiar with the new lane, it is expected that the ride along this stretch of Peachtree Road will continue to improve.
Georgia DOT’s activities are not always obvious. For example, people are often surprised to learn that GDOT has a team of archaeologists.

So in an effort to demonstrate what we do—after all, GDOT is a lot more than roads and bridges—we are sharing what goes on behind the scenes.

Behind the Scenes with Georgia DOT

ARCHAEOLOGY

"Georgia DOT does the majority of the professional archaeological work in Georgia. As an archaeologist at GDOT, I am challenged daily by complex projects with interesting resources from across the state," said Pamela Baughman. "Often I start first at GDOT in the spring of my time in the field. As I have become more senior, I have steadily worked less in the field doing my own surveys and more in the office managing consultants who do projects and surveys for us."

Georgia DOT’s Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels.

The first post features Senior Transportation Archaeologist Pamela Baughman from GDOT’s Cultural Resources section, who explains that archaeologists play a vital role in a construction project—from pre-planning to post-completion.

“What we do is ensure the Department’s compliance with state and federal cultural resources and historic preservation laws,” Baughman said. “Then we help to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts to those resources.”

In the initial stages of a project, the team goes into the field to identify areas that could be recorded as archaeological sites; then they evaluate those sites for significance and integrity to see if they are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. They consult with project designers to make sure that harm is avoided to Georgia’s significant cultural resources. From there they follow the project through construction to further ensure that cultural resources are not impacted.

Archaeologists sometimes find artifacts at project sites that help them identify early inhabitants of the area. These can range from historic artifacts (50 years and older) like ceramics, glass and nails. Or they can be precontact stones and pottery fragments of pottery.

While these projectile points are from different eras with thousands of years between them, they had a common use—as tools. The ones on top are made of quartz and were found in Bibb County. The lighter one is from about 4500 BC and the darker one is about 3000 years older—from around 8000 BC. The projectile points on the bottom were found in Troup County. They are made of chert, a sedimentary rock made of silica that often breaks with sharp edges. It was determined, based on color, that these came from the Coastal Plain.

Artifacts first go to the lab to be cleaned, washed and analyzed, counted and weighed. The lab looks for characteristics about the material and design to help identify the time period from which it came, as well as what it was used for. Artifacts are then curated and many are stored at the University of West Georgia’s Antonio J. Waring Archaeological Laboratory for future research. Artifacts are loaned out for educational purposes and for exhibits at libraries in the county where they were found.

“There are a lot of really neat historic sites in Georgia,” Baughman said. “And the Department considers their significance in the course of all of our projects.”

For the Baughman interview and other Behind the Scenes with Georgia DOT footage, visit http://bit.ly/2FVqk88. Be sure to follow GDOT on all of our social media channels. 

Bre Kirkpatrick is Georgia DOT’s social media specialist. Reach her at bkirkpatrick@gdot.gov.

Remembering Carey Ellerbee

A Man of Service

The Georgia DOT family mourns the loss of one of our own. Carey Ellerbee died in a tragic accident the morning of January 18 after he spent the night clearing roads of snow and ice for the citizens of Georgia. Carey, a husband, father, grandfather and brother, was a truck driver out of the District Three office and was with GDOT for nearly 20 years. He served in the U.S. Navy on the USS Saipan during the Vietnam Conflict. He was chairman of the Board of Deacons at his church. Carey will be missed.
Division of Construction – Remone Kendricks, engineering technician. The I-85 rebuild required sampling, testing, inspecting and control of materials including performing concrete cylinder breaks to ensure strengths. Kendricks set aside personal time at all hours so the expedited schedule could be achieved.

Division of Engineering – Chris Rudd, assistant state roadway design engineer, led the development of Roadway Design new 12-month Roadway Accelerated Program for Individual Development (RAPID). He worked tirelessly to ensure that participants become qualified candidates for a lead design engineer position.

Division of Finance – Intermodal Accounting Team: Lisa English, Kevin Stone. When the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) enacted new billing requirements that tripled the information required for federal billing, the team met those requirements while maintaining their high level of customer service.

Division of Intermodal – Carrie Anderson, public transportation specialist. When Anderson came into her role some aspects of her responsibilities were behind. She completed the unfinished paperwork and solidified relationships with local officials. Her work improved the GDOT Transit Program in District 3.

Division of Permits and Operations – Simon Ali Nzemoke, operations analyst. With a knack for motivating and bringing people together, Nzemoke receives an exceptionally high level of confidence from team members. Her positive energy fosters an environment where everyone feels valued.

Division of Program Delivery – Timothy Evans, project manager. When he joined the Office of Program Delivery Evans was assigned several high profile projects with local governments. His management style, customer service and collaboration garnered his praise.

Division of Planning – Air Quality Branch: Phil Peeyo, Daniel Dolder. When FHWA initiated a series of on-site, state DOT Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program reviews Peeyo and Dolder organized an overview of the process. FHWA said Georgia’s presentation was the best of all the states reviewed.

Deputy Commissioner’s Staff – Orren Davis, IT Network Group team manager. Davis shows exceptional leadership moving his team forward in maintaining GDOT’s highly technical IT infrastructure. This includes the Navigator system, critical to providing statewide traffic information. Davis helps keep Georgia moving.

Chief Engineer’s Staff – Design Review Team: Walter Taylor, Jason Willingham, John Kopotic, Joseph Capello, Jason Wiggins, Ted Craiglee, Winton Ward, Tanisha Georges, Abdul Koundaba. Despite high turnover and limited staff, the team did a remarkable job completing required activities. By involving all participants in the Rapid Review process they create an atmosphere that encourages participation, helps ensure productive reviews, and a better understanding of the project.

The Commissioner’s Achievement Award is presented for outstanding service or achievement, a creative idea or innovation that has a positive impact.

D1 - Jerry Thomason, construction project manager. His knowledge of area roads and their unique issues allows Thomason to anticipate and fix problems quickly and efficiently. Whether it is an airport runway improvement, sidewalk upgrade or roadway resurfacing, he holds himself to a high standard.

D2 - Sharon Johnson, general trade craftsman. Johnson an exceptional team player, helps others whenever she can. She strives to exceed not only in her responsibilities like grounds maintenance, preparing assembly rooms for meetings and minor building repairs, but also in her professional growth like cross training in routine maintenance.

D3 - Doug Morris. Morris and his team handle time-sensitive and often complicated Quick Response Projects. When concrete pours at multiple locations were needed in a short timeline to enable brine treatment of routes, Morris got the job done. He takes pride in ensuring the safety of the motoring public.

D4 - District 4 Accounting Office: Kimberly Holt, Cynthia Holsenbeck, Brittany Brown. This exemplary team consistently displays customer service and teamwork. District employees know that their questions will be resolved promptly, thoroughly and efficiently.

D5 - Right of Way Office: Lonnie O’Quinn, Zackary Bailey, Malcolm Coleman, Tony Griffs, Kwalesha Allen, David Baldwin, Dr. Clinton Fort. Their work ethic, attitude and accomplishments are a testament to their organizational commitment and character. Last year, they delivered 100 percent of ROW acquisitions and certifications for assigned projects prior to letting. Has maintained a flawless record for years.

D6 - Christopher “CJ” Cumbee, construction project manager. Cumbee’s leadership and professionalism have gained him respect among co-workers, contractors, the public and local officials. In 2016 he worked day and night to ensure that two high-profile, high budget projects were completed on-time and on-budget.

D7 - Nebat Abraham, planning and programming coordinator. In addition to duties that include managing projects and providing training and guidance to design staff, Abraham took on supervision of the district design office. She is working with the district maintenance office on a pilot project to improve resurfacing packages by creating an electronic log database.

Deputy Commissioner’s Staff – Office of Procurement Transportation Procurement Section: Curtis Scott, Karen Oaks, Steve Farrar, Sharon Cyrus, Daniel Foley, Vanessa Walker, Doug Kirkland, Foylan Battle, Rhonda Hightower-Rucker, Andrea Durden, Melissa Hannah, Amber Shaker-Greer, Kelly Engel, Charmane Dobbs, Ann Willis. This team was committed to supporting efforts in outsourcing engineering and design-related services. Despite an overwhelming workload and being short-staffed in critical contract specialist positions, the group met all performance metrics and set new records in the number of engineering and design-related contracts executed.

Division of Construction – Michael Garner, Jeremy Daniel. Their construction expertise and ‘get the job done’ attitude played a major role during demolition and reconstruction of the I-85 Bridge. Garner and Daniel spent numerous hours on site while maintaining a somewhat normal schedule with their assigned duties. They provided supervision for staff on site for work inspection. Their work was crucial to the project’s expedited timeline.

Division of Engineering – Megan Hedeen, Sam Woods. A recent collaboration between the offices of Environmental Services and roadway Design offered new possibilities to make more informed transportation planning decisions and to streamline the environmental process. It is anticipated that this will lead to improved planning and construction for mobility-focused projects.

Division of Intermodal – Troy Green. As public transportation coordinator for District 5, Green also covered for D4 until that position was filled. He identified that the process improvements, represents GDOT at meetings and events, and makes special presentations on rural transit.

Division of Permits and Operations – Christie Barry, traffic operations manager. Barry created the new Intersection Control Evaluation Policy designed to install safety-related decision-making into intersection evaluations to determine the right solution for the location. This has the potential to aid in GDOT’s efforts to reverse the increase in roadway fatalities.

Division of Planning – Design Traffic Forecasting Branch: Tom McQueen, Rhonda Niles, Dan Funk, Andre Washington. The group has implemented numerous process improvements including updating the Traffic Forecasting Manual and developing a streamlined internal business process review. Last year 20 percent more projects were completed compared to the previous year, while average delivery time dropped 60 percent.

Deputy Commissioner’s Staff – Office of Procurement Transportation Procurement Section: Curtis Scott, Karen Oaks, Steve Farrar, Sharon Cyrus, Daniel Foley, Vanessa Walker, Doug Kirkland, Foylan Battle, Rhonda Hightower-Rucker, Andrea Durden, Melissa Hannah, Amber Shaker-Greer, Kelly Engel, Charmane Dobbs, Ann Willis. This team was committed to supporting efforts in outsourcing engineering and design-related services. Despite an overwhelming workload and being short-staffed in critical contract specialist positions, the group met all performance metrics and set new records in the number of engineering and design-related contracts executed. An increase of 52 percent from the record high.
Making Connections

Bridges Across Georgia

By Liz Rothman

Long before the ancient Greeks built arch bridges more than 3000 years ago, some ant species were using their own bodies to form living bridges to allow other ants to cross water or surface gaps. Like humans, these ants know that connections are essential to their survival.

Georgia’s bridges come in all types, shapes and sizes. They span huge rivers and babbling brooks. They cross roads and railroads and valleys. And while most carry vehicles, some are for pedestrians to safely cross a busy route. Yet with all their differences, bridges have a common purpose: connecting people and places.

Bridges are essential to mobility, safety and economic development. They affect everyday lives. Drivers cross bridges to get to school, farmers cross bridges to bring crops to market. Bridges are critical for emergency vehicles and for general freight movement. Like houses and roads, bridges require maintenance to keep them structurally sound and to extend their lives. As aging bridges begin to lack integrity or do not adequately serve current traffic needs, they are replaced based on a prioritization process.

Georgia DOT’s Office of Bridges and Structures, headed by State Bridge Engineer Bill DuVall, is responsible for inspecting and maintaining existing bridges, including retaining walls and culverts, and designing and reviewing new bridges to meet the highest safety and environmental standards.

Investing in Georgia’s bridges

As a result of the Transportation Funding Act (TFA) of 2015 Georgia DOT now has sustained funding to focus on previously deferred routine maintenance like bridge preservation and rehabilitation, as well as replacement. Georgia DOT’s FY 2018 investment in repairing and replacing existing bridges is $301 million and $369 million in FY 2019.

“The federal bridge replacement program, which was eliminated in 2012 with the adoption of MAP-21, gave GDOT more flexibility in managing our bridges. But it also gave us more responsibility,” DuVall explains. “We were no longer bound to federal apportionments specifically dedicated to bridge replacements. With TFA, the Department has made it a priority to upgrade and maintain our bridges and we use TFA funds to leverage more federal dollars for this program.”

Investing in Georgia’s bridges

As a result of the Transportation Funding Act (TFA) of 2015 Georgia DOT now has sustained funding to focus on previously deferred routine maintenance like bridge preservation and rehabilitation, as well as replacement. Georgia DOT’s FY 2018 investment in repairing and replacing existing bridges is $301 million and $369 million in FY 2019.

“The federal bridge replacement program, which was eliminated in 2012 with the adoption of MAP-21, gave GDOT more flexibility in managing our bridges. But it also gave us more responsibility,” DuVall explains. “We were no longer bound to federal apportionments specifically dedicated to bridge replacements. With TFA, the Department has made it a priority to upgrade and maintain our bridges and we use TFA funds to leverage more federal dollars for this program.”

Inspecting Georgia’s bridges

Every two years Georgia DOT conducts topside—above the waterline—inspections on public-use on- and off-system bridges. Inspectors walk the bridge deck, and also assess bridge conditions from below. They look at beams, columns and caps, make sure joints are sealed, and check for deficiencies like cracking, exposed rebar and corrosion. They also look for scour—holes in the streambed around abutments or piers, caused by swiftly moving water—that can compromise bridge integrity. Snooper trucks, bucket trucks and drones are used for a close up look.

At a minimum of five-year intervals inspection dive teams inspect from the waterline down. They use deep-water and shallow-water boats, and scuba gear to inspect steel piling for corrosion, concrete for deterioration and timber piers for decay. With their hands-on inspection they are able to identify critical deficiencies like scour below the bridge foundation.

Joshua Cofer is Georgia DOT’s bridge inspection supervisor. “Bridges are an integral part of our transportation infrastructure and we need to maintain them to ensure safe travel for the public,” he said. “We conduct inspections as though our family members are driving across these bridges. When we finish evaluating a bridge, if we determine it is safe for our family, then we’ve done our job to keep the public safe.”

See Georgia DOT’s Bridge Maintenance video at https://youtu.be/rgUu5sDPm.
News from the Districts

Georgia Department of Transportation has seven district offices that operate and maintain the state transportation system at the local level. Each district has a district engineer who plans, organizes and directs district activities. Districts are subdivided into area offices that are overseen by an area engineer. The district communications officer (DCO) is the district spokesperson, who provides information to the community, the media and local officials.

First widened southbound section of SR 400 open

The newly widened portion of SR 400 southbound between SR 141 and McFarland Parkway opened to traffic in December. The four-mile segment is the first of a total of 14 southbound miles to be widened. Construction continues southbound from SR 369/ Browns Bridge Road to SR 141/ Peachtree Parkway.

The project adds a lane in each direction on SR 400 from McFarland Road to State Route 369 and includes widening the bridges over Big Creek and the Sawnee Creek portion of Lake Lanier. Northbound widening was completed last fall.

The project is funded through a partnership between Forsyth County and the Georgia Department of Transportation. GDOT contributed $13 million. The remainder – approximately $34.5 million – is funded by the Forsyth County Transportation Bond, approved by 63 percent of Forsyth County voters in 2014. Overall completion is scheduled for fall 2018.

D1 office staff has new address:

1475 Jesse Jewell Parkway NE, Suite 100,
Gainesville, GA 30501

For 55 years District One called 2505 Athens Highway home. Now office staff occupy 33,000 square feet of a newly constructed building on Jesse Jewell Parkway. The Georgia DOT maintenance buildings campus on Athens Highway remains in place.

“The relocation of district staff positions our headquarters closer to downtown Gainesville,” District Engineer Brent Cook, P. E., said, “We anticipate this will boost public involvement, enhance our use of technology, and enable us to more efficiently respond to emergencies as the command center.”

While leasing space is not the traditional way Georgia DOT district offices relocate—typically a new structure is built—the previous building, constructed in the early 1960s, required renovations that would be costly and slow. By leasing new space, staff was situated in weeks and is settled for the next ten years.

District One rallies teens to Drive Alert Arrive Alive

The goal of the Drive Alert Arrive Alive safety campaign is simple: raise awareness about how driver behavior contributes to preventable crashes and fatalities. And District One is doing just that.

Students wake up with phones in their hands. Last year Forsyth and Dawson counties were the top crash counties for drivers ages 15-19. District Communications continues to tour local high schools through May 2018 to get out the word about safe driving behavior. We ask students to really think about the potential outcome of texting and driving, of not wearing a seat belt, or of driving impaired. So far, over 100 Forsyth County students have signed a pledge to put down the phone, buckle up and drive alert.
New East Dublin bridge crossing opened and dedicated

State Transportation Board Member Don Grantham helped hundreds of attendees in Laurens County celebrate the brand new Oconee River Crossing made possible by Transportation Investment Act (TIA) monies. The 2.4 mile project that extended Country Club Road south of the existing Blackshear Ferry Road intersection, opened to traffic in October 2017.

Special trick-or-treating tradition

For Halloween 2017, all of our GDOT District Office departments setup for trick or treaters from the Ridge Road Special Education Class. Thirty-five kids along with 15 parents/teachers joined the fun annual event at the Tennille Office - aimed at giving back to the local community.

District blood drives saving lives

Led by Accounting Manager Pamela Garner, who serves as a Shepeard Community Blood Center Primary Blood Drive coordinator, the Tennille District Office routinely hosts mobile blood drive collection events. In 2017, there were 163 donors, resulting in 132 good units. Considering that one donation can save up to three lives, this giving impacted 396 lives of those with the greatest and most urgent need. Since 2003 our district has tallied over 2,000 blood donations with the potential to save an estimated 6,980 lives.

Byrd wins GDOT statewide award

District Two’s Robbie Byrd received Georgia DOT’s 2017 Community Service Award for his dedication to improving the quality of life for young people and seniors through his involvement in a variety of programs. See more on page 9.

District Two employees recognized with annual 2017 Commissioner’s Awards

Commissioner Russell McMurry and District Engineer Jimmy Smith were on hand to honor the winners at our annual meeting.

Ellen Wright, Commissioner’s Merit Award

Larry Morris and Corbett Reynolds accept statewide Safety Awards on behalf of District Two.

• Best Lost Time Injury Record: 0%
• Most Improved Overall Safety Record: 6.94%
• Most Improved Lost Time Injury Record: -1.62%

Sharon Johnson, Commissioner’s Achievement Award

Doug Morris, Commissioner’s Achievement Award. Morris (left) was honored for his dedication to providing leadership in completing the pour of over 800 yards of concrete at four locations in less than three months to complete District Brine Operations construction.

Increasing brine production

District Three recently completed the addition of three brine production units to improve the District’s response to winter weather events. The new production units are located in Upson, Monroe and Muscogee counties. Each location is equipped with a new brine salt barn, production unit and storage tanks to support winter weather operations. The new units, along with the existing Locust Grove production unit, will significantly improve the efficiency of brining operations on I-85, I-75, I-16 and I-475 as well as the state routes in the 31-county area of District 3. Brine unit in photo is located in Upson County.

District Three 2017 Annual Meeting and Commissioner’s Awards

Commissioner Russell McMurry and District Engineer Michael Presley joined D3 staff at our Annual Meeting to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the employees of West Central Georgia. A few were recognized for going above and beyond. Photos: Kimberly Larson, GDOT
Familiar faces. New roles.
District Four recently saw section head reassignments. Providing broad management opportunities in various programs fosters overall effectiveness for the district.

- Construction Manager Van Mason (formerly Traffic Manager)
- Maintenance Manager Scott Chambers (formerly Construction Manager)
- Utilities Manager Stacy Aultman (formerly Maintenance Manager)
- Preconstruction Engineer Tim Warren (formerly Utilities Manager)
- Traffic Manager Randy Rathburn (formerly Assistant Construction Engineer)

A New Year & extreme weather go hand-in-hand in southwest Georgia
From tornadoes in 2017 to a series of winter weather events starting just days into 2018, District 4 has invested time and resources to keep Georgians safe in our region and in other areas of the state.

For the Jan. 3 winter storm, District 3 brine trucks assisted us by pretreating Interstate 75 the previous night. After the storm our employees were out before dawn with snow plows and a salt/rock mixture to treat icy bridges and roads. We loaded 172 tons of rock and 137 tons of salt.

Round two arrived Jan. 7, when we sent 48 people and 11 snow plows to Atlanta to assist in clearing routes in metro and north Georgia.

We were fortunate that the winter storm that came through Jan. 16 and 17 was mild in our district. Locally, we used 134 tons of rock/salt mixture on our state routes and bridges. We also sent two shifts of employees and 10 snow plows to Atlanta.

District Four employees receive 2017 Annual Commissioner’s Awards
Commissioner Russell McMurray joined District Engineer Ritchie Swindell and district staff to honor award recipients.

Area, Signal and Special Forces Units, 248 employees, Commissioner’s Merit Award

Employees were recognized for their actions during a tough and busy January 2017 when they repeatedly responded without hesitation or complaint to the challenge of clean up and repair following tornadoes that struck on two different occasions. Section heads and unit managers accepted the award on behalf of 45 crews.

(L-R) Judy Tucker, Brad Cleveland, Dennis Wilkinson, Ned Tyson, Brian Fischer, Commissioner Russell McMurray, Scott Chambers, Brent Laps, Keith Carver, Paul Kaszen wers, Stacy Aultman, Van Mason.

District Four snow plow clears SR 32 in Irwin County.

District Four employees receive 2017 Annual Commissioner’s Awards
Commissioner Russell McMurray joined District Engineer Ritchie Swindell and district staff to honor award recipients.

Area, Signal and Special Forces Units, 248 employees, Commissioner’s Merit Award

Employees were recognized for their actions during a tough and busy January 2017 when they repeatedly responded without hesitation or complaint to the challenge of clean up and repair following tornadoes that struck on two different occasions. Section heads and unit managers accepted the award on behalf of 45 crews.

(L-R) Judy Tucker, Brad Cleveland, Dennis Wilkinson, Ned Tyson, Brian Fischer, Commissioner Russell McMurray, Scott Chambers, Brent Laps, Keith Carver, Paul Kaszen wers, Stacy Aultman, Van Mason.

A New Year & extreme weather go hand-in-hand in southwest Georgia
From tornadoes in 2017 to a series of winter weather events starting just days into 2018, District 4 has invested time and resources to keep Georgians safe in our region and in other areas of the state.

For the Jan. 3 winter storm, District 3 brine trucks assisted us by pretreating Interstate 75 the previous night. After the storm our employees were out before dawn with snow plows and a salt/rock mixture to treat icy bridges and roads. We loaded 172 tons of rock and 137 tons of salt.

Round two arrived Jan. 7, when we sent 48 people and 11 snow plows to Atlanta to assist in clearing routes in metro and north Georgia.

We were fortunate that the winter storm that came through Jan. 16 and 17 was mild in our district. Locally, we used 134 tons of rock/salt mixture on our state routes and bridges. We also sent two shifts of employees and 10 snow plows to Atlanta.

One man and a plow
Georgia Ports Authority Executive Director Griff Lynch was quoted praising Georgia DOT’s tremendous effort during the rare winter storm in Savannah in early January. Here is an excerpt from the Savannah Morning News Jan. 11 article. “… the biggest help came from the Georgia Department of Transportation, which sent a salt and brine truck with a snow plow on the front … You always hesitate to single any one person out when so many people did a great job, but Jerry Harper of GDOT was like a superman … I barely saw him off that truck in the two days he stayed with us … essentially, one man and a plow cleared the majority of our 1,200-acre terminal.”

From the mouths of babes
District Five brought GDOT’s Drive Alert Arrive Alive message to over 400 children (K-5) at Jesup Elementary School’s Community Safety Day in November. Coastal Area Traffic Enforcement Network Coordinator Captain Luther Hires, with the Governor’s Office of Highway Safety, sent this message to district staff after the event. “You’ll be proud to know that you made an impression on at least one little one Friday. We went out to eat Friday night and the cashier at the restaurant told us that her daughter told her that noisy children were a distraction so she had to be quiet when Mom was driving…”

District Five employees recognized with annual awards
Commissioner Russell McMurray and District Engineer Brad Saxon gathered with District 5 staff in November for fellowship and reflection on a job well done in 2017. They presented awards to staff who especially demonstrated team work, dedication and professionalism.
Interchange demonstrates safety and operational efficiency

The reconstructed I-75/Redbud Road Interchange in Gordon County, which opened in late 2016, is now a model of safety and operational efficiency. That wasn't so in 1989 when the Department compiled a priority list of interstate interchanges with operational problems. The interchange received a number two priority, meaning reconstruction was important, but not urgent. Two issues were identified - poor sight distance under the I-75 Bridge and the pace of traffic movement.

Safety, always a top priority for Georgia DOT, necessitated an operational efficiency. That wasn't so in 1989 when the Department faced funding and 21-year-old technology. But in 2016, the interchange was reconstructed, which included the widening of SR 156 to provide two through lanes - one eastbound and one westbound - and left turn lanes on SR 156 for access to the I-75 entrance ramps. The widening of SR 156 required the replacement of the I-75 bridge over SR 156 with one long enough to span the widening. The project included the realignment and reconstruction of all four of the I-75 interchange ramps. Sidewalks were also constructed on both sides of SR 156 through the limits of the project.

District Six employees recognized with annual 2017 Commissioner’s Awards

Commissioner Russell McMurry and District Engineer Dewayne Comer presented the awards for merit and achievement at our annual meeting.

CJ Cumbee, Commissioner’s Achievement Award (Brandon Clayton accepted on Cumbee’s behalf). Cumbee, construction project manager, was honored for his work ethic, professionalism and for successfully taking on the challenges of managing two significant construction projects: reconstruction of the Rocky Face Interchange and resurfacing for SR 156.

District Six employees recognized with annual 2017 Commissioner’s Awards

Commissioner Russell McMurry and District Engineer Dewayne Comer presented the awards for merit and achievement at our annual meeting.

Donna Lee Welch, Commissioner’s Merit Award. Assistant District Construction Engineer Welch is an asset to the construction office where she manages $1.3 billion of work and nearly 600 projects. Welch and the Contracts Management Team have reduced the Project Pending Backlog and improved the Closed Project Process.

Nebiat Abraham, Commissioner’s Achievement Award. Abraham is district planning and programming coordinator. In addition to assigned duties, she has taken on the responsibility of supervising the district design office. Abraham’s work ethic, technical skills and willingness to assist others demonstrate her commitment.

Deborah Dunagan, Commissioner’s Merit Award. Dunagan, district procurement manager and a 20-year GDOT veteran, received the award for her service, dedication, commitment, personal accountability and great teamwork.

13-year GDOT veteran named assistant district engineer

Grant Waldrop is the new District 6 assistant district engineer. He works along with District Engineer Dewayne Comer as the face of Georgia DOT in northwest Georgia, and with local and state law enforcement, chambers of commerce, business leaders, the public in the 17-county area, and with adjoining state departments of transportation.

“Grant understands our district’s work in great detail,” Comer said. “His leadership skills, attention to details and thoroughness in everything he does will help keep District Six moving forward while delivering the best transportation services to northwest Georgia citizens - on time and on budget.”

Waldrop began his career with Georgia DOT in 2004 and was previously the D6 traffic engineer. He has a bachelor’s in civil engineering and a master’s focusing on transportation.

Restriping provides big improvement in Metro Atlanta

Traffic is flowing on Peachtree Road due to a three-mile restriping. The project, which runs from the Buford-Spring Connector to Pharr Road in Buckhead, removed one northbound lane and transformed it into a continuous two-way left turn lane. The project also added dedicated left turn signals. The new configuration has improved traffic flow and safety. See article on page 7.

D7 receives statewide Most Improved Preventable Vehicle Accident Record

District 7 had 22 preventable vehicle accidents last year - a reduction of 12 from the previous year. The improvement demonstrates the district’s efforts to better manage risks on the road.

District Seven employees receive annual awards

Commissioner Russell McMurry joined District Engineer Kathy Zahul and D7 employees in celebrating the honorees.

Lending a helping hand

During a winter snow and ice event in southeast Georgia, District 7 crews traveled to Savannah to lend a helping hand.

Commissioner McMurry, District Engineer Zahul, Peronica Stephens, Johnny Everitt, Shau Fregoe.

Atlanta Road Bridge reconstruction project

The New Year began with considerable progress made on the reconstruction and operational improvement project at I-285 and Atlanta Road. Elements of the project have been completed including installation of the bridge metal deck, construction of the bridge diaphragms and edge beams, construction of the on-ramp to I-285 southbound and the sound walls. Bridge completion is anticipated in the spring.

The overall project, originally scheduled for completion in fall 2017, was delayed when construction crews identified key structural and safety modifications, not included in the original project scope of work, that needed to be resolved. Those issues have been addressed and the project is on track for an anticipated completion in fall 2018. We thank the community for their ongoing patience.

Anything ironic about snow on a beach in Georgia?

District 7 crews traveled to Savannah to lend a helping hand.
I want to thank you guys sooo much! Had a tire go flat while driving down the interstate and called CHAMP. You were there within 5 minutes, changed my tire, and I was on my way. Thanks!!!

M. Clanton, via Facebook

I received notice from AAA that it would be another 35 minutes to reach me - no need at that point since Nicholas has finished the job! He told me all about CHAMP - amazing program, people & cool trucks! Now I know who to call, CHAMP not AAA, amazing program, people & cool trucks!

C. Mitchell, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage

Keep meaning to congratulate you on the [Dougherty County] intersection of Jefferson Ave and Philema Rd. The restructuring of the on and off ramps was impressive but the timing and control of the lights is the best I’ve ever seen … Right from the start the lights made things better. After a short fine tuning period they really work well. I go through this intersection many times a day and I’ve never seen any long backups and I never feel as if I have to wait long for the light to go my way. The lights seem very adaptive to traffic in real time. You folks should get an award for this intersection! Thanks for the good work.

G. Simons, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage

I recently sent a question about cleaning the graffiti on the noise wall along I-20. I received a prompt response and was made aware … that removal had already taken place. Unfortunately, the noise wall was marred soon after and again, it was painted over by GDOT. I want to commend the GDOT for continuing to combat this … so many copy catters come out … and it seems to be a never ending problem … your efforts are appreciated … Thank you for working hard to preserve Atlanta’s beauty.

C. Oden, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage

Letters, Emails, Notes & Tweets

I had a flat tire on 75 SB near W. Paces Ferry and before I could pull up the AAA app in my phone to call roadside assistance, a knight-in-shining-armour-with-a-CHAMP-logo, Nicholas Baker, who arrived on-scene to my disabled vehicle … along I-95 just north of Savannah … Thankfully, I was able to get the car off the highway and onto the shoulder … Nicholas arrived within 15 minutes and had my tire off by the time I received notice from AAA that it would be another 35 minutes to reach me - no need at that point since Nicholas has finished the job! He told me all about CHAMP - amazing program, people & cool trucks! Now I know who to call, CHAMP not AAA, amazing program, people & cool trucks!

C. Mitchell, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage

Keep meaning to congratulate you on the [Dougherty County] intersection of Jefferson Ave and Philema Rd. The restructuring of the on and off ramps was impressive but the timing and control of the lights is the best I’ve ever seen … Right from the start the lights made things better. After a short fine tuning period they really work well. I go through this intersection many times a day and I’ve never seen any long backups and I never feel as if I have to wait long for the light to go my way. The lights seem very adaptive to traffic in real time. You folks should get an award for this intersection! Thanks for the good work.

G. Simons, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage

I recently sent a question about cleaning the graffiti on the noise wall along I-20. I received a prompt response and was made aware … that removal had already taken place. Unfortunately, the noise wall was marred soon after and again, it was painted over by GDOT. I want to commend the GDOT for continuing to combat this … so many copy catters come out … and it seems to be a never ending problem … your efforts are appreciated … Thank you for working hard to preserve Atlanta’s beauty.

C. Oden, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage

I had a flat tire on 75 SB near W. Paces Ferry and before I could pull up the AAA app in my phone to call roadside assistance, a knight-in-shining-armour-with-a-CHAMP-logo, Nicholas Baker, who arrived on-scene to my disabled vehicle … along I-95 just north of Savannah … Thankfully, I was able to get the car off the highway and onto the shoulder … Nicholas arrived within 15 minutes and had my tire off by the time I received notice from AAA that it would be another 35 minutes to reach me - no need at that point since Nicholas has finished the job! He told me all about CHAMP - amazing program, people & cool trucks! Now I know who to call, CHAMP not AAA, amazing program, people & cool trucks!

C. Mitchell, via GDOT’s CONTACT US webpage
You and Georgia DOT. Together we’re a winning team.