



Annual Report
Mississippi Department of Transportation

FY 2008

Our Mission

The Mississippi Department of Transportation is responsible for providing a safe intermodal transportation network that is planned, designed, constructed and maintained in an effective, cost-efficient and environmentally-sensitive manner.



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Letter from the Director

Dear Taxpayer:

Accomplishing more with fewer resources has long been a priority for MDOT. In 2008, nearly everyone felt the economy's squeeze—individuals, Wall Street, and certainly state agencies. When the economy slows, so do MDOT's revenue sources, making it even more challenging to build and maintain transportation infrastructure. And yet, that transportation system is what underpins our economy, linking us to regional, national, and even global markets. As a state and as a nation we must continue to invest in our highways, bridges, ports, rail lines, public transportation services, airports, bicycle routes, and pedestrian connections to ensure a strong future.

For MDOT, meeting transportation needs amid financial constraints requires a close focus on our mission and goals, and strategic prioritization to ensure that the projects we undertake provide the greatest possible public benefit. In Fiscal Year 2008, despite many challenges, we have produced tremendous benefits for the people of Mississippi and our businesses and visitors.

For example, our efforts to provide access to interstate highways are encouraging manufacturers to build new plants in Mississippi, generating good jobs and spurring related economic development. We're testing new materials and maintenance methods to extend the life of our bridges and highway surfaces, saving or delaying substantial reconstruction costs. And above all, we have continued to improve safety for motorists through projects such as the STACK in Jackson and elimination of the "S-Curve" in Laurel, along with installation of hundreds of miles of guardrail statewide.

We are also mindful of the surroundings of transportation projects. The Liberty Road Bridge and Interchange in Natchez, which eliminates a bottleneck while respecting the historic character of that city, is just one example of how progress can be balanced with preservation of historic and natural resources. MDOT continues to be a national leader in developing wetland and stream mitigation banks to compensate for unavoidable impacts to the environment.

As we embark on a new year, continued progress will depend on three factors that have long been MDOT's strengths: partnerships, technology, and people. We are committed to ongoing collaboration with the many federal, state, and local entities whose missions align with ours. Partnership with the private sector will be particularly important: MDOT's first formal public-private partnership (PPP) project, the Airport Parkway in Jackson, is now under way, and the Legislature has made tolling an option for funding future transportation system improvements.

The gains in efficiency we have achieved in recent years have been possible because of improved technology, which streamlines communications, data collection and analysis, and even traffic control and the management of our roadways. MDOT is committed to staying at the forefront of ever-changing technology—such as the award-winning wireless traffic management system implemented along U.S. 90, which will reduce the vulnerability of the coastal highway's traffic signals to severe weather.

Ultimately, MDOT's contributions to improving the quality of life in Mississippi depend upon the dedication, innovation, and skills of our people. Many motorists have expressed heartfelt appreciation for assistance provided by our devoted maintenance employees, whether they are changing a tire for stranded travelers or orchestrating Contraflow to evacuate thousands of residents in advance of a hurricane. Each of MDOT's employees, regardless of their area of expertise or level of experience, is provided with professional development opportunities to hone their skills and expand their career options. That investment in training and mentoring translates to a transportation system that is technically advanced, efficiently delivered, and expertly maintained—values that resonate regardless of the economic climate.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Larry L. Brown". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Larry L. "Butch" Brown
Executive Director



the Commission

Bill Minor

Northern District Transportation Commissioner, Chairman – Before being elected transportation commissioner in 2003, Minor served in the Mississippi Senate for 20 years. He was both vice chairman and chairman of the Senate Highway Committee and helped orchestrate the passage of the 1987 Four-Lane Highway Program. He also chaired the committees on Finance and Public Utilities. Minor and his brother established Minor Brothers Plumbing which has grown into a chain of successful hardware stores in North Mississippi.



Dick Hall

Central District Transportation Commissioner – Hall served six terms as a member of the Mississippi Legislature – three in the House and three in the Senate. He chaired the Environment Committee in both the House and Senate and the Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare. Most recently, he chaired the Senate Appropriations Committee. He was the first recipient of the Hugh L. White Free Enterprise Award. Commissioner Hall owns a company which represents manufacturers and also has commercial real estate holdings.



Wayne Brown

Southern District Transportation Commissioner – In 1966, Brown cofounded Batson and Brown Consulting Engineers, and in 1967, TAB Map Company. He has served as county engineer in George, Green, and Jackson counties. He served as president of the Mississippi Association of Professional Land Surveyors, the president of the Mississippi State Board of Registration for Engineers and Land Surveyors, president of the Mississippi Consulting Engineers Council, and is an American Consulting Engineer Council fellow.



the Executive Team

Larry L. “Butch” Brown



MDOT Executive Director – Brown is a longtime businessman and the former mayor of Natchez, Mississippi. He is a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi with degrees in management and marketing, and served in the school’s department of marketing and management as an instructor for seven years. Brown is a member of the Executive Committee of the Transportation Research Board. He serves as president of the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) and as vice president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), where he also serves as Chairman of the AASHTO Standing Committee on Ports and Waterways. Other appointments include Co-Chairman of the International Trade and Transportation Institute, Chairman of the Mississippi Transportation Institute, the Advisory Board of the Mississippi State University School of Engineering, and Ex-Officio Board Member of Mississippi Mainstreet. In 2001, he was chosen to serve on the Advisory Board of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and in 2003, on the Advisory Board of the Mississippi World Trade Center. He has also served on the Executive Board of Directors of the Mississippi Business Finance Corporation, the White House Conference on Small Business and the U.S. Department of Commerce Industry Sector Advisory Committee on Trade Policy. As former Chairman of the Mississippi-Louisiana Bridge Authority, Brown was responsible for funding construction of the Natchez/Mississippi River Bridge.

Melinda McGrath



McGrath earned a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering from Mississippi State University in 1985 and began her engineering career in MDOT’s Bridge Division. After serving as project engineer in both the Northern and Southern Districts and serving as the District Area Engineer over six Coast counties, she was named Assistant Chief Engineer in 2003. In August 2008, she was promoted to the position of Deputy Executive Director/Chief Engineer of the Mississippi Department of Transportation.

Brenda Znachko



Znachko is a graduate of the University of Florida School of Law - Graduate Tax Program, University of Mississippi Law Center and the University of Southern Mississippi, where she received a Bachelor’s degree in political science. Upon graduation, Znachko worked for private law firms before joining MDOT as a Special Assistant Attorney General in 2002. Znachko is a commissioned officer in the U.S. Naval Reserves, a Louisiana Board Certified Tax Attorney, and a bar member in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida. She was promoted to Deputy Executive Director/Administration in July 2004. In 2006, she received the AASHTO President’s Award for Administration for her work on MDOT’s Finance Team.

Willie Huff

Huff is a graduate of East Texas State University at Texarkana, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice and a Master's degree in interdisciplinary studies, with concentration in management. He has served as a deputy sheriff, a city police officer, and for 10 years as commander of a bi-state narcotics unit consisting of investigators from four agencies in two states. From 1993 to 2002 Huff was Chief of Police for the City of Natchez, Mississippi. He has served as MDOT Director of Law Enforcement since June 2002.



Steven Edwards

Edwards is a graduate of Mississippi State University where, in 1992, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering. Upon graduation, Edwards joined MDOT as a project engineer for the Carthage, Mississippi, Project Office, where he worked until 1998. Edwards is a registered Professional Engineer and Professional Land Surveyor. He served as MDOT's Rails Division Engineer from 1998 to 2007. He was promoted to Director, Office of Intermodal Planning, in 2007.



the Department

Transportation Commission

Bill Minor – Northern District Commissioner,
Chairman
Dick Hall – Central District Commissioner
Wayne Brown – Southern District Commissioner
Amy Hornback – Secretary to the Commission

Administration

Larry L. “Butch” Brown – Executive Director
Melinda McGrath – Deputy Executive Director/
Chief Engineer (as of August 2008)
Brenda Znachko – Deputy Executive Director/
Administration
Steven Edwards – Director, Office of Intermodal
Planning
Willie Huff – Director, Office of Enforcement
John M. Simpson – Chief Information Officer
J. Brooks Miller – State Aid Engineer
Richard Sheffield – Assistant Chief Engineer,
Operations
Mark McConnell – Assistant Chief Engineer,
Field Operations (as of August 2008)
David Foster – Assistant Chief Engineer,
Preconstruction

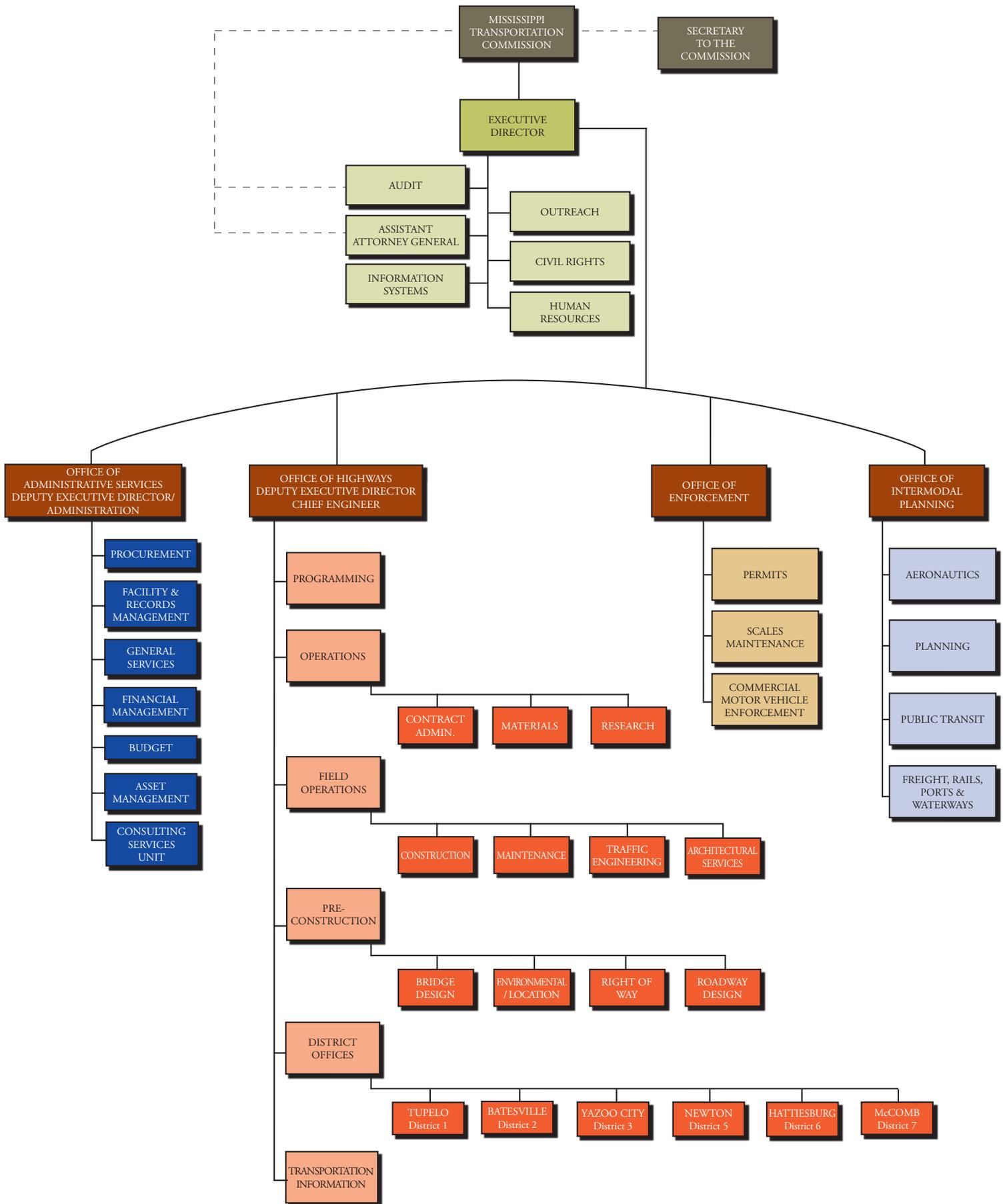
District Engineers

Bill Jamieson, District 1, Tupelo, MS
Richard Allen, District 2, Batesville, MS
Kevin Magee, District 3, Yazoo City, MS
William R. May, District 5, Newton, MS
Steven Twedt, District 6, Hattiesburg, MS
Darrell Broome, District 7, McComb, MS

Division Directors

Ray Barksdale – Transportation Information
Director
Claiborne Barnwell – Environmental Engineer
Randy Battey – Research Engineer
Carolyn Bell – Director of Civil Rights
Tommy Booth – Aeronautics Director
Robbie Burt – Freight, Rails, Ports &
Waterways Director
Charles R. Carr – Public Transit Director
Mitch Carr – State Bridge Engineer
Wes Dean – State Traffic Engineer
Jackie Duckworth – Programming Director
Scot Ehrgott – Consulting Contract Services
Director
Julie Ethridge – Asset Management Director
Byron Flood – Budget Director
Dianne Gavin – Audit Director
Lisa Hancock – Procurement Director
B.B. House – Contract Administration Engineer
Brad Lewis – State Construction Engineer
Mary McDonald – Human Resources Director
Danada McMurtry – Outreach Director
Henry Morgan – General Services Director
Jeff Pierce – State Planning Engineer
Keith Purvis – Roadway Design Engineer
Dan Smith – Right-of-Way Director
Roy Tipton – Assistant Attorney General
Mark Valentine – Financial Management
Director
John D. Vance – State Maintenance Engineer
Ruthann Vercher – Facility & Records
Management Director
James Williams – State Materials Engineer

Organization





MDOT by the Numbers

Fiscal Year (FY) 2008

- 1,035.8 miles of new highway constructed
- 251 miles of highway resurfaced
- 495 lane miles of highway sealed
- 4,924 miles of unpaved shoulder re-shaped
- 3,633 miles of pavement striping applied
- 1,200 miles of pavement friction-tested
- 305,405 acres of right-of-way mowed by MDOT staff and contractors
- 14,770 cubic yards of litter picked up by MDOT maintenance personnel and contractors
- \$171,318,865 invested in maintenance of Mississippi's highway system
- 6 new contracts let for replacement of structurally deficient bridges
- 1 new contract let for construction of new bridges on new alignments
- 1 new contract let for widening or rehabilitating bridges
- 6,551,287 tractor-trailers weighed to manage wear-and-tear on Mississippi highways
- 175,886 oversize/overweight load permits issued
- \$14,722,965 generated through oversize/overweight load permit fees and \$1,957,141 through weight penalties
- 94 drug arrests of commercial vehicle drivers by MDOT Law Enforcement
- 16,500 assets (vehicles and equipment), valued at \$124,532,313.02, properly accounted for according to state audit requirements
- 389 assets (vehicles and equipment) sold, generating \$1,021,291.00 for new equipment purchases—a 16.32% return on MDOT's original investment
- \$407 million in highway projects accelerated to date through MDOT's innovative financing program, Highway Enhancement through Local Partnerships (H.E.L.P.)
- 24 new woman- and minority-owned small businesses certified by MDOT under the federal Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program
- 111 DBE firms recertified to do business with MDOT
- 11% (\$33,178,514) of MDOT's federal funds spent with DBE consultants and contractors, exceeding the goal of 10%
- 175 state certifications earned (Administrative Support Certification Program, Basic Supervisory Course, Certificate in Supervisory Management, and Certified Public Manager Program) (CPM-7, CSM-9, BSC-49, ASCP I-29, ASCP II-55, & ASCP III-26)
- 54 graduates of the L.E.A.D. 18-month leadership training program
- 16 scholarships totaling \$10,000 (funded by the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) awarded to students attending community colleges in Mississippi
- 58 driving under the influence and safety belt usage simulator demonstrations held at schools, reaching 17,000 students
- 15,013 bags of litter removed in the Adopt-A-Highway program. Over 7,167 bags removed in Trash Bash events. 354,348 bags removed in Inmate Litter program (total number for city and county)
- Over 19,690 students reached at over 130 anti-litter school presentations; over 2,172 children reached at 35 community library presentations; 82 presentations given for community/civic organizations
- 280 teachers representing 87 schools trained in TRAC and RIDES transportation education modules for students in kindergarten through 8th grade

Goals

Accessibility and Mobility

Improve accessibility and mobility for Mississippi's people, commerce, and industry

Safety

Ensure high standards of safety in the transportation system

Maintenance and Preservation

Maintain and preserve Mississippi's transportation system

Environmental Stewardship

Ensure that transportation system development is sensitive to human and natural environmental concerns

Economic Development

Provide a transportation system that encourages and supports Mississippi's economic development

Awareness/Education/ Cooperative Processes

Create effective transportation partnerships and cooperative processes that enhance awareness of the needs and benefits of an intermodal system

Finance

Provide a sound financial basis for the transportation system



Goal

Accessibility and Mobility

Traffic Flows Smoothly through Natchez Interchange

The intersection of U.S. Highway 61 and Liberty Road in Natchez was transformed with the November 2007 completion of the Liberty Road Bridge and Interchange. Not only do the improvements improve safety and reduce congestion, they form an appropriate gateway to this unique historic city.

U.S. 61 is a major north-south artery carrying significant commercial traffic through the state—traffic that is expected to double over the next 20 years. Liberty Road connects downtown Natchez to the terminus of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Before the project, Liberty Road was a four-lane roadway except for the stretch beneath the U.S. 61 bridge, where there was only room for two lanes. The bottleneck was notorious for delays, and access between U.S. 61 and Liberty Road was confusing and congested.

The new interchange encompasses a two-span pre-stressed concrete beam bridge wide enough to carry the six lanes of U.S. 61 (including the Liberty Road exit lanes), with full-width shoulders on the outside edges and along the median. The bridge spans seven full lanes of Liberty Road, providing for acceleration lanes, a left-turn lane, and full-width shoulders. Long acceleration lanes were provided from the northbound and southbound entrance ramps for greatly improved traffic safety. The full width right-of-way on U.S. 61 through the project limits will accommodate an upgrade from four to six lanes of through traffic in the future.

The design prohibits left turns from U.S. 61 onto the entrance and exit ramps, eliminating one of the primary causes of accidents at the old interchange. New project signage makes navigating from Liberty Road to U.S. 61, and vice versa, easy and intuitive.

Developing an interchange that was appropriate for its unique surroundings was paramount from the earliest stages of the project. The project team researched local history and collaborated with the Natchez Historical Society and other interested members of the community during conceptual design. This process ensured that the bridge design and architectural elements would mesh with the area's history and vision for the future. The “gateway” to the community is primarily communicated through a monument tower at the center of the bridge with flanking towers at the bridge ends. Other aesthetic details include the use of architectural pre-cast concrete design elements on the bridge, as well as a three-color paint scheme and brickwork at the towers. The design includes metal accents such as decorative handrails and grill insets. Decorative roadway lighting was selected to match the Natchez Trace Parkway lighting, with underground wiring. The mast arm poles for traffic signals are also decorative with underground wiring. An extensive landscaping plan incorporates 13 types of native trees, 25 types of shrubs, and decorative pavers and retaining walls.

The Liberty Road Bridge and Interchange received Honorable Mention at the 2008 Federal Highway Administration Excellence in Highway Design Awards program. Only 12 projects from more than 100 entries throughout the U.S. were selected for honorable mention.



Jackson Mobility Analysis Prioritizes Improvements

The Jackson Mobility Study and Needs Analysis, completed in June 2008, provides long-range strategic planning guidance in prioritizing transportation improvements in the Jackson metropolitan area. Its recommendations are aimed at improving mobility, safety, access by various modes, and the development potential of the Jackson area.

Plans for improving mobility encompass new road construction and highway widening, as well as an expanded role for transit and enhanced management of Jackson's busiest corridors using Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Following detailed analysis of major corridors and extensive consultation with area leaders, residents, and business owners, three alternative scenarios were developed to weigh the relative merits of various approaches to improving mobility. The Jackson Travel Demand Model was used to compare the performance of the three scenarios in terms of travel time, connectivity, and efficiency, to determine which projects would offer the most benefit for reducing congestion.

Based on the scenario evaluation, 19 key corridors were identified for further evaluation and analysis. Projects in 18 of the corridors were included in the final Preferred Plan, which identifies specific

improvement projects. To guide implementation of the plan, which will take place over many years, corridors were ranked in order of priority taking into consideration input from stakeholders, transportation performance, safety, and economic benefits.

Six of the corridors represent major new highway construction:

- U.S. 49 Spur, from U.S. 49 to I-20 at Airport Road (11.0 miles)
- Jackson Freeway, Southeast Quadrant, from U.S. 49 to I-55 (12.9 miles)
- Jackson Freeway, Northeast Quadrant section A, from Heindl Road to MS 25 (19.6 miles)
- Jackson Freeway, Northeast Quadrant section B, from MS 25 to I-20 (13.4 miles)
- Jackson Freeway, Southwest Quadrant, I-55 to I-20 (22 miles)
- MS 18/East Brandon Parkway (non-freeway), from I-20 to U.S. 80 (8.0 miles)

MDOT collaborated with the Federal Highway Administration, the Central Mississippi Planning and Development District, and a team of planning consultants to execute the study.

Gulf Coast Bridges Restore Mobility

The new Bay of St. Louis Bridge and Biloxi Bay Bridge were completed in FY 2008, eliminating the lengthy detours that had been necessary since Hurricane Katrina destroyed both structures. By restoring mobility between coastal communities and along U.S. Highway 90, the bridges provide the connections—both physical and emotional—that are vital to the continued rebuilding and strengthening of Mississippi’s Gulf Coast.

The Bay of St. Louis Bridge, connecting Bay St. Louis and Henderson Point, opened to two lanes in May 2007 and was completed in November 2007. The Biloxi Bay Bridge, which connects Biloxi and Ocean Springs, opened to two lanes in November 2007 and was completed in April 2008. The bridge contracts were MDOT’s first design-build projects, completed at nearly twice the pace of traditional construction.

The bridges each feature a pedestrian and bicycle lane which provides additional connectivity for non-motorized modes and allows the stunning views from the bridges to be enjoyed at a slower pace. The pedestrian lane has also enabled the bridges to be used for various events, such as the Biloxi Bay Bridge Walk to raise awareness for heart disease. MDOT is installing plaques—22 on the Bay of St. Louis Bridge and 17 on the Biloxi Bay Bridge—along the walkway railings with the work of local artists rendered in bronze. The metal for the plaques was salvaged from the original bridges.

The Bay of St. Louis Bridge won the People’s Choice Award in the America’s Transportation Award competition sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The project was one of ten selected to compete for national honors from a field of 41 regional winners across the U.S. The bridge was a winner in the “On-Time” category for projects over \$200 million. The Biloxi Bay Bridge tied for first place in the “Innovative Management” category for projects over \$200 million. It also earned the top Award of Excellence in the Project Management category of the FHWA’s Excellence in Highway Design Biennial Awards.

Coordination Boosts Public Transportation Service and Efficiency

Coordinating human services transportation and public transportation resources offers significant opportunities for improving service and efficiency. However, because there are numerous transportation providers statewide, each with their own focus, coordinating transportation services has been an ongoing challenge in Mississippi and in most states.

Although MDOT does not directly provide public transportation, it oversees and allocates funding for public transportation providers throughout the state. In FY 2008, MDOT’s Public Transit Division developed and implemented a customer-driven planning process that includes training, technical assistance, and implementation components at the regional and state levels. The goal is to build upon the existing transportation service delivery systems to develop coordinated regional networks to meet the changing needs of the region’s customers. The process facilitates collaboration among transportation service providers, human services agencies, planners, advocacy groups, elected officials, faith-based organizations, consumers, and the business community.

Already MDOT’s leadership is increasing coordination among providers and raising awareness about public and specialized transportation services among consumers, human services organizations, the business community, and elected officials. More public transportation services are being provided, hours of operation have been increased, and service areas have been expanded. At the same time, non-revenue miles have been reduced, shared vehicle use has been more efficient, and technology has been incorporated to improve efficiency of call centers, routing, scheduling, and billing.



Goal

Safety

Wider, Safer Yazoo River Bridge Nearing Completion

Soon, there will be no reason to detour around the Yazoo River Bridge, which carries U.S. 61 traffic over the Yazoo River in Warren County.

The cramped “through-truss” structure is being replaced with a safer and wider concrete bridge that not only has room to accommodate oversized loads, but gives drivers a much greater sight distance, which should reduce accidents and traffic back-ups. Currently, trucks hauling oversized loads must go 100 miles out of their way because the existing bridge—at roughly 24 feet wide—is too narrow for them to cross. The new bridge will be approximately 44 feet wide, with full-width shoulders on the side to allow disabled vehicles to pull out of the traffic lane.

“The fact that the new bridge will have no height restrictions enhances safety,” says District 3 Engineer Kevin Magee. “When you’re driving across the old bridge, you have all of this structural steel above you, and on both sides. It limits the height and width of the loads that you’re able to haul through there.”

While the existing bridge is safe and structurally sound, it is considered “functionally obsolete,” meaning it is no longer adequate to handle the current traffic demand. Further, because it is so narrow, repairs or routine maintenance work under traffic can be hazardous for MDOT maintenance staff and contractors.

Construction of the new bridge is approximately 85 percent complete. All substructure construction was completed in 2008, and work on the deck began. The project is expected to be complete by Summer 2009. Transitioning vehicles onto the new bridge will essentially only require restriping, as the two structures stand side-by-side. The north approach section to the new bridge is complete, and the south approach is under construction. Removal of the old bridge will complete the \$32.7 million project.

Traffic Management Centers Allow MDOT, Safety Personnel to Track Road Conditions

The DeSoto County Traffic Management Center (TMC), deployed in 2007 and located in a shared building with the Southaven Police Department headquarters, allows both MDOT personnel and public safety officials to keep a continuous eye on traffic conditions in the area.

Through the utilization of MDOT’s system of regional traffic cameras, traffic accidents can be immediately detected and the appropriate authorities notified. The cameras can be tilted and zoomed to provide specific information to first responders. MDOT personnel immediately post an incident alert on the department’s mstraffic.com Web site, which enables area motorists to make more informed decisions about which routes to use. Motorists who were planning to travel through the incident site can choose to bypass the area entirely, which reduces the number of secondary incidents and related delays. Installation of an MDOT Dynamic Messaging Board in DeSoto County is also a component of the TMC project. The message board—which is currently under construction—will provide drivers with information regarding areas they may be approaching. The boards are currently in operation at nine strategically-located areas in the Jackson metropolitan area. DeSoto County’s Dynamic Messaging Board should be operational in Summer 2009.

The majority of MDOT’s traffic management operations are coordinated from the Statewide TMC in Jackson, but the existence of the regional TMC centers is a vital and essential component of MDOT’s mission to provide a safe intermodal transportation system throughout Mississippi. TMC facilities are located on the Gulf Coast, in Hattiesburg and Jackson, and now in DeSoto County—one of the fastest-growing areas in the nation. The Statewide TMC headquarters is run by four operations personnel, along with a TMC manager.



ROVER, SIDNE Bring Dramatic Demos To Students

If seeing truly is believing, two of MDOT's newest safety-demonstration tools are virtually invaluable. One dramatically illustrates the dangers of driving or riding in vehicles without buckling up. The other simulates the delayed reaction times and diminished driving skills that are experienced while operating a vehicle in an impaired condition.

ROVER—a truck cab that spins on its own axis—illustrates what can happen to unrestrained occupants in a 35-mile-per-hour rollover crash. MDOT presented the ROVER demo on 58 occasions to students and youth throughout Mississippi in FY 2008.

ROVER spins with three crash-test dummies inside its cab, and the visual effect certainly makes an impression. One of the dummies is adult-size, and the others are the sizes of children, ages two and six. When the children are safely buckled up and the adult is unrestrained, the adult dummy repeatedly crashes into the others, illustrating the point that when even one person inside a vehicle is not buckled up, it puts everyone at risk. On ROVER's final spin, all the occupants are buckled up, and even with the truck upside-down, everyone remains safe.

A 10-year MDOT study revealed that 75 percent of all vehicle-related fatalities in Mississippi occurred when people were not wearing their seat belts. The ROVER demonstrations, which are presented to students in grades K-12, graphically illustrate the need to buckle up in any vehicle.

SIDNE is a battery-powered go-cart that simulates both “straight-and-sober” and impaired driving. As a student drives SIDNE around MDOT's portable obstacle course, an MDOT representative flips a switch that makes the vehicle behave as if the driver's reactions are slowed. This simulates the effects of impaired driving, and the point definitely gets across that driving while impaired is not a smart thing to do.

Both ROVER and SIDNE are components of Mississippi's Drive Smart campaign, which has proven to be an invaluable tool in MDOT's mission to educate motorists and reduce highway injuries and fatalities.

“The idea is to educate them while they're young,” says MDOT Safety Programs Coordinator Christy Milbourne. “If we can get one child to go home and say, ‘Mommy, you need to wear your seat belt,’ and Mommy does and walks away from a crash because of it, that is an immediate safety improvement.”



STACK Work Provides Much-Improved U.S. 49/I-20 Interchange

The newly-reconstructed interchange at U.S. Highway 49 and Interstate 20 has not only eliminated bottleneck congestion that formed during heavy commute periods, it has created much safer driving conditions in the area.

The third phase of the I-20 project known as the STACK brought new ramps and new lanes to all three of the major highways in the area, along with a flyover ramp which shifts northbound travelers off U.S. 49 and onto I-20 West, or I-55 North. The project provides dedicated lanes for motorists traveling either direction on U.S. 49 to smoothly transition onto I-20 or I-55.

From a safety standpoint, the addition of the new lanes is critical. Dedicated lanes eliminate, to a great degree, the “weaving” through traffic that was often required for drivers to access their desired exit ramp. Vehicle weaving on an interstate or highway system has a direct correlation with accidents and back-ups.

Work on STACK III began in March 2003, at an estimated cost of \$58 million. The massive scope of the project required that much of the construction and striping work be performed at night, with temporary concrete medians utilized to protect both motorists and workers. A permanent concrete median was installed on U.S. 49, and lanes were added to the existing frontage roads along the highway. All of the integrated components of the project reduce the need for vehicles to turn across traffic, a major safety enhancement for commuters and passengers in the area.

Conceptual plans for the STACK were formed in the late 1970s, with the overall project sequenced in four separate phases. Necessary right-of-way was obtained in 1980, and the \$7 million STACK I construction began in 1992. STACK II, a \$30.2 million project, began in 1997.

The entire project is designed to culminate with STACK IV, which will include the construction of new lanes, ramps, and loops for both the Gallatin Street and State Street interchanges along I-20. STACK IV, designed to make accessing and exiting I-20 at either of those interchanges easier and safer, is expected to be pursued as funding becomes available.

New Construction Eliminates Laurel’s I-59 ‘S-Curve’

The infamous S-curve in Laurel is now a thing of the past. New bridge construction—aided in part by funding through the Highway Enhancement through Local Partnerships (H.E.L.P.) program—has eliminated the S-curve and provided motorists in Laurel with a straighter, wider, and much safer I-59 bridge. Traffic was transitioned onto the new section in September 2008, and final completion is targeted for June 2009.

H.E.L.P. allows cities and counties to quickly initiate needed highway improvements through bond issues that are repaid by MDOT. Most of MDOT’s debt is reimbursed by the FHWA.

“Because we had a very lengthy environmental review on this project, just getting construction started was a milestone for us,” District Engineer Steve Twedt says. “Getting traffic off of the old S-curve and onto the new bridge was the second big milestone. The final completion of the project, which includes removal of the old section and the opening of the two Beacon Street ramps, will be the third milestone.”

Traffic from Highways 15 and 84 was routed through the old S-curve portion of I-59, so the new construction is making traveling through Laurel safer for many, many motorists.





Goal

Maintenance and Preservation

Maintenance Vital to MDOT's Mission

Protecting the investments of Mississippi taxpayers in the state's transportation infrastructure system is among the most vital tasks that MDOT undertakes on an annual basis.

With 5,500 state-maintained bridges and 14,300 miles of highway to manage and sustain, the department must put as much or more effort into preserving existing infrastructure as it does designing and building new bridges and roadways. The maintenance mission is never-ending, and while the work is expensive and time-consuming, the investments help to stretch transportation dollars and enhance safety for everyone traveling through our state.

Overlays, bridge inspections, asphalt repairs, and even removing litter and mowing rights-of-way along our interstates are all part of the department's maintenance duties. And MDOT approaches the task with a keen eye toward safeguarding the environment. The department has developed an Environmental Field Guide along with a Standard Operating Procedure policy as a reference tool and training guide for maintenance personnel.

On certain asphalt projects, MDOT may require that contractors enter into "warranty" agreements, which guarantee that the pavement will continue to meet certain performance standards over a designated time span. If the pavement becomes deficient, it is repaired or replaced by the contractor. Because costs to contractors are higher when warranty contracts are required, these contracts are selectively utilized.

A comprehensive, multi-faceted bridge inspection program is also coordinated by MDOT each year, allowing the department to make the best use of limited Federal-Aid funds allocated for bridge replacement and rehabilitation.

In FY 2008, MDOT personnel and contractors removed 14,770 cubic yards of litter from Mississippi roadsides. More than 300,000 acres of right-of-way was mowed and maintained and 251 highway miles were resurfaced, among dozens of other annual maintenance duties. In all, more than \$171 million was invested in the maintenance of Mississippi's highway system in Fiscal Year 2008.

Bridge Inspection and Painting

All components of MDOT's transportation system require scheduled maintenance and close scrutiny. Steel-truss bridges and steel girders and beams are certainly high on the list. Exposure to the elements can cause steel, wooden, and even concrete bridges to deteriorate over time, so these structures are thoroughly examined on a regular basis according to federal standards.

Bridge painting is an important part of the process. A freshly-painted steel bridge is not only aesthetically pleasing; it instills a sense of confidence among travelers that the structure is being regularly maintained. In District 2 alone, two of the district's six truss-style bridges were repainted in FY 2008, and officials hope to extend that work in the coming year. Mississippians can trust that MDOT keeps a close eye on each of its roads, bridges, box-bridge culverts, and highways, to ensure the strictest-possible maintenance standards. Any deficiency in any of the structures that MDOT maintains is immediately noted and addressed.

Ongoing technological advances are allowing inspectors to accomplish more, in terms of inspections and maintenance, in a shorter amount of time. In today's economy—with every level of government experiencing budget cuts and financial restraints—fast, accurate data collection is a must. A proactive maintenance program cuts costs in the long run, and provides safer, more structurally sound infrastructure today.



GIS Systems Show the Way

Geographical Information System (GIS) data-gathering is a component of virtually every aspect of the work that MDOT provides for motorists in Mississippi.

GIS is essentially a means of linking data to maps. Whether it's the physical location of a particular road sign, a linear feature representing a road or bridge, or a shape representing a land parcel, GIS helps MDOT engineers and other officials to precisely map transportation infrastructure and associate a vast array of information pertaining to particular features.

For example, the number of traffic accidents that have occurred within a 200-foot radius of a particular intersection can be calculated using GIS technology. The one-mile section of I-55 that typically has the worst rutting conditions can be identified through GIS.

Maintenance needs can also be prioritized, and assets more efficiently invested, using GIS technology. Problem areas can be readily identified by a “cluster” of activity noted through GIS data.

A variation of the GIS system allows MDOT to identify where the oldest of its high-mast light stands are located, and the data stored within the system helps MDOT officials determine the most efficient maintenance cycle for the lights and their stands.

GIS and its related systems provide the accurate, up-to-the-minute data that is necessary for MDOT to coordinate the most efficient maintenance schedule for its infrastructure systems.

Prioritizing Maintenance Statewide

In FY 2008 MDOT made substantial progress toward completing a database that will identify and store data on every state-designated road in Mississippi. Once all of the roads have been cataloged and programmed, the Multilevel Linear Referencing System (MLRS) will help MDOT reduce maintenance costs, enhance safety in areas with high crash rates, and take proactive steps to eliminate recurring maintenance issues.

While maintenance needs are currently referenced by county route and log mile, safety issues are currently logged by cumulative miles—authorities start at one end of the state and mark mileposts, and safety incidents, along the way to the other end. The MLRS will allow MDOT to integrate these sets of information, and cross-reference the collected data to identify, for instance, deteriorating road beds, or sites where accidents frequently occur.

When the project is completed, MDOT will have a comprehensive Linear Referencing System which will integrate the two existing systems, along with MDOT's Geographic Information System (GIS), into one. The goal is to allow MDOT to spend its maintenance dollars more efficiently, while simultaneously identifying sites with higher than average accident rates to help determine how to address those issues. Identifying maintenance issues in a geospatial manner will help MDOT prioritize repair schedules, so that existing resources are maximized. Integrating the existing identification systems will also reduce overhead costs for maintenance and planning, and potentially reduce the number of personnel needed to manage the systems.

Goal

Environmental Stewardship

Wetland and Stream Mitigation Banks Preserve Habitat

MDOT aims to avoid impacting wetlands and other sensitive environmental areas when at all possible. Sometimes, however, to accommodate pressing transportation needs, there is no alternative. Mississippi was one of the first states in the U.S. to recognize the need for a comprehensive program to create “mitigation banks” to compensate, at least in part, for unavoidable impacts to habitat.

A mitigation bank is a large parcel of preserved land with natural or man-made features that make it a desirable habitat. A dollar value is associated with the habitat, and portions of that value—known as credits—are sold to entities desiring to compensate for wetlands lost to development. Since the 1990s, MDOT’s Environmental Division has steadily worked toward its goal of establishing a wetland and stream mitigation bank in each of Mississippi’s 10 watershed basins. Eight banks have been established and an additional five are expected to be added in 2009. After establishing the banks, MDOT typically transfers them to a federal or state environmental agency to manage in perpetuity.

The program has been developed in partnership with federal and state agencies as well as conservation organizations. Investing in large-scale consolidated projects that mitigate for multiple transportation improvements—rather than creating “mini-wetlands” at each affected site—ensures that the mitigation is provided at a sufficient scale to achieve long-term conservation results.

In FY 2008 MDOT expanded its holdings in the Coastal Basin through the purchase of 455 pine savannah wetland credits from The Nature Conservancy’s Old Fort Bayou Wetlands Mitigation Bank in Jackson County. MDOT will soon complete the transfer of more than 200 additional acres to the Strawberry Plains

Audubon Center near Holly Springs. The land will provide habitat for the thousands of ruby-throated hummingbirds that migrate from Canada through Mississippi to their winter homes in Mexico and Central America, as well as valuable wetland mitigation for the Coldwater River. Other activities include the continued development of wetland and stream banking credits in Monroe and Jackson counties.

MDOT’s investments satisfy its obligations under the federal Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act—helping to avoid future project delays while protecting some of Mississippi’s most sensitive habitats.

Tanglefoot Trail Right-of-Way Purchased

MDOT has completed purchase of nearly 50 miles of right-of-way for the proposed rails-to-trails project from New Albany to Houston, known as the Tanglefoot Trail. MDOT worked with Iron Horse Resources and the Three Rivers Planning and Development District in securing right-of-way and provided the 80 percent matching trail construction grant.

Winding through rural Mississippi, the trail is planned to reconnect communities once linked by the rail line, which itself followed a centuries-old trail used by the Chickasaw Tribe of Native Americans. The Tanglefoot Trail, with its proximity to the Natchez Trace, will further add to the area’s tourism and recreation appeal. Projections for the trail’s direct economic benefit to the community have been estimated at \$3 to \$4 million annually.

Nine government entities have collaborated to create a recreational district to administer, operate, and maintain the trail. Participants include the board of supervisors in Union, Pontotoc, and Chickasaw counties and the cities of New Albany, Ecu, Pontotoc, Algoma, Houlka, and Houston.



Environmental Assessments Weigh Impacts

MDOT is prudent in its role as an environmental steward in relationship to its transportation projects. The Environmental Division carefully balances the needs and requirements of people and communities with consideration of the impact that transportation infrastructure will have on natural resources, habitats, and cultural and historical assets.

An environmental assessment (EA) is one measure MDOT utilizes to determine the possible impact—positive or negative—that a proposed project may have on the environment. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that decision-makers consider the ensuing environmental impacts to decide whether to proceed with the project and to determine its precise location. Environmental assessments are conducted in accordance with national regulations.

Most recently, MDOT conducted an EA of a proposed project to widen approximately eight miles of State Route (SR) 25 (Lakeland Drive) from SR 475 (Airport Road) to the SR 471 South Interchange. The assessment resulted in a “Finding of No Significant Impact” from the Federal Highway Administration, meaning the project will have negligible impacts on the environment and may proceed. The project will improve safety and mobility for the traveling public and will accommodate future travel demand. The proposed project will also relieve congestion on nearby routes.

Environmental Impact Statement Seeks to Balance Progress and Preservation

An environmental impact statement (EIS) represents a more in-depth analysis than an environmental assessment, and considers the proposed project and various alternatives in detail. Like an EA, an EIS is conducted in accordance with federal regulations.

One ongoing EIS is examining the best location for a 120-mile segment of I-69 between Robinsonville and Benoit. The segment, which runs through Bolivar, Coahoma, Tunica, and Sunflower counties, is part of an interstate corridor connecting Mexico to Canada. It is touted as being a great economic development tool for one of Mississippi’s poorest regions.

While this particular region of the Delta will benefit tremendously from the construction and completion of the interstate, it also has a great many assets—historic plantation and Native American sites and a fragile ecosystem—to be protected. The EIS outlines the pros and cons, with regard to the natural and man-made environment, of various options for locating the highway. The EIS guides the decision-making process so that costs, benefits, and trade-offs are properly considered.

Goal

Economic Development

Frontage Road, Interstate Access Pivotal In Landing U.S. 78 Toyota Plant

A major Toyota manufacturing plant is planned for north Mississippi, in part because of the transportation access being provided by MDOT.

Construction of a vital frontage road system along U.S. 78 began in December 2007. An interchange with U.S. 78 (Future Interstate 22) sits directly in front of the \$1.3 billion plant site. The frontage road will tie into County Road 203 west of the Toyota site, and extend east to the SR 9 North interchange, and to the SR 9 South interchange at Sherman. The road's connections with the existing highway systems will give Toyota's trucks direct access from I-22 to the plant's 1,700-acre development. Project completion is slated for August 2009.

In northeast Mississippi, much of the economic base has traditionally centered on furniture manufacturing, but that sector of the economy has cooled in recent years and some plants have relocated. Area officials are hoping that Toyota will lead the way to a bright and prosperous future. MDOT has played a big role in helping attract one of the world's leading automotive manufacturers to the region.

"Interstate access is one of the primary considerations of the developers evaluating sites for these large plants," says District 1 Engineer Bill Jamieson. "Manufacturers no longer warehouse parts, so having an interstate nearby, whereby they can get parts in and out and distribute their goods in a timely manner, is extremely important. If this interstate wasn't here, Toyota probably wouldn't be here either."

Along with the frontage road construction, MDOT is reworking two interchanges on Highway 9. Phase One construction will consist of upgrades to the SR 9 North interchange. Ramps will be reworked on the south side of

U.S. 78 to accommodate the heavier traffic volume that Toyota will bring to the area. SR 9 North will become a five-lane section to accommodate the increase in traffic, and SR 9 South will be improved as well. Toyota intends to route all trucks to the plant through this interchange. Phase Two will provide for additional road construction, ramp improvements, and the addition of loops to facilitate traffic to and from the plant. The Blue Springs interchange—which lies directly north of the plant site—will also be reworked.

SR 791 Four-Lane Project Bolsters Economic Development

Some highway improvement projects can be about much more than transportation.

The completion of four-lane widening work along SR 791 in Lowndes County has not only facilitated greater truck traffic flow for the \$880 million, 1.2-million-square-foot SeverCorr steel mill facility, the project also played a role in attracting a new Paccar Engine Company plant—a \$400 million project on a 400-acre site which will initially employ more than 200 workers. The plant's workforce is expected to climb to 500 as production levels increase.

MDOT's work along SR 791 was completed October 10, 2008. The project entailed the widening of 2.4 miles of the highway, along with a 1.2-mile extension of SR 791. The total project cost was \$15.2 million.

It is highly anticipated that the widening project will bring future economic development benefits to the 'Golden Triangle' region of the state. Paccar officials stressed the excellent location and easy access to the company's other North American truck assembly facilities when the company's construction project was announced in July 2007. The 420,000-square-foot plant is expected to be completed in 2009.



Greenville Bridge, 82 Bypass Providing Economic Boost to Region

A pair of construction projects near Greenville will bring immediate and future economic benefits to the area.

The Greenville Bridge and the U.S. 82 Bypass are two independent projects that will ultimately be joined to provide a major transportation upgrade for Highway 82 in Washington County.

The Bypass work is divided into two sections, with two phases in each section. The first phase is already under construction and is currently estimated to be 29 percent complete. Phase One will create approximately six miles of four-lane highway along with two large interchanges—one at SR 454 and another at SR 1. Phase One work began in March 2008, and has a projected completion date of September 2010, at a cost of \$32 million.

Phase Two is scheduled to be let in summer 2009, and will include grading, drainage, and the construction of a bridge along a nine-mile section of roadway. A major interchange will be built on U.S. 82 at Leland, along with grade-separation bridges on existing roads. Phases Three and Four of the project will include paving work on the previously-constructed portions.

The massive Greenville Bridge project encompasses the replacement of an aging, narrow, and height-restricted two-lane bridge with a state-of-the-art, four-lane structure with generous shoulders. The placement of the old bridge at a curve in the river poses a significant impediment

to barge traffic due in part to water current flows in the area. The aesthetically stunning new bridge is strategically placed 2,800 feet downstream across a straighter stretch of river to address this issue.

The main span of the new bridge is a one-quarter-mile-long, four-lane cable-stayed structure spanning the Mississippi River near Greenville. Construction of the approach sections on both sides of the new bridge is nearing completion. Both of the approaches will provide four-lane road sections and four-lane conventional bridge sections to tie the approaches in Arkansas and Mississippi with the main span. The \$66 million Arkansas approach is roughly 1.25 miles long, and is currently 82 percent complete. MDOT is administering the contract for the Arkansas approach, and the project is expected to be completed in Summer 2009.

Construction of the Mississippi approach—an \$86 million project—began in April 2005 and is substantially complete. The Mississippi approach is approximately 1.8 miles long.

A fourth contract will be let for the demolition of the 1940 Greenville Bridge. The new bridge is projected to open in spring 2010. When completed, the Greenville Bridge will become the fourth-longest cable-stayed span in North America. The total length of the project—bridge, approaches, and new roadway—is 3.8 miles.

Construction of both projects has provided an immediate economic boost to the region, with hundreds of construction jobs being filled. Ultimate completion will expedite the shipment of goods across—and beneath—the new bridge.

Goal

Awareness/Education/ Cooperative Processes

MDOT Executive Director Leads AASHTO, SASHTO

Communication with other state and national transportation officials is essential to MDOT in planning, constructing, and maintaining transportation projects. This open dialogue facilitates coordination of state and federal planning efforts and provides an invaluable forum for sharing transportation “best practices.” The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO) provide transportation leaders with a professional network, enabling them to work together to develop innovative and cost-effective approaches for meeting today’s transportation challenges.

Involvement with these two organizations gives MDOT a voice in national efforts to address pressing issues such as transportation funding, transportation planning strategies, and the role of technology in making the most efficient use of our existing transportation infrastructure. This voice is particularly strong with MDOT Executive Director Larry L. “Butch” Brown taking the reins as president of SASHTO and vice president of AASHTO for 2008. According to Brown, “It is particularly vital during these difficult economic times that Mississippi has a seat at the table when decisions are made that will impact our ability to provide our citizens with a progressive and safe highway system.”

In addition to his other responsibilities in these prestigious and demanding positions, Brown will serve as host of the 2009 SASHTO Conference, to be held in Biloxi, Mississippi. The conference will bring more than 1,200 transportation officials to the state. In 2010, Brown will host the AASHTO Conference in Mississippi, convening transportation professionals from throughout the U.S.

‘Albert the Monkey’ Inspires Students to ‘Keep Mississippi

Making his debut at the Mississippi State Fair was Albert the Monkey, the newest member of MDOT’s litter prevention team. Albert joins Myrtle the Turtle in her efforts to inspire responsible citizenship by presenting an anti-litter message to students across Mississippi. Myrtle is recognized by children of all ages and is the inspiration for a generation of schoolchildren to be good stewards of our natural resources.

In FY 2008 Myrtle and Albert joined forces to introduce “Think Green, Keep Mississippi Clean,” a new campaign to promote the “greening” of our state. Albert and Myrtle appeared on local television stations, met with schoolchildren across the state, and signed copies of their new book, *Albert’s Mississippi Adventure*, which is being distributed to libraries and schools.

In addition to the educational initiatives in Mississippi’s schools, MDOT continues its nationally-recognized partnership with Keep Mississippi Beautiful. A joint campaign to implement a Cigarette Litter Prevention program involves a review of cigarette litter laws, educational programming, advertising, and the placement of monitored cigarette ash receptacles at the Mississippi Welcome Centers.

MDOT’s annual Trash Bash, a series of litter cleanup events held around the state in May, resulted in the collection of more than 7,160 bags of trash by 1,850 MDOT volunteers.

Also this year MDOT’s new State Anti-Litter Coordinator, Karen Philipp, initiated a new Safety Vest program to improve safety for Adopt-a-Highway and Adopt-an-Interchange volunteers. “The safety of our volunteers is paramount. We have a responsibility to do everything possible to keep the people safe who are making a personal commitment to help keep our highways clean and green,” says Philipp.



Environmental Outreach Program a Model for Other States

Meaningful public participation results in better transportation projects—but engaging people in the transportation decision-making process can be challenging.

Realizing that conventional public meetings and announcements were not resulting in the desired level of public participation, the MDOT Environmental Division developed a more innovative approach. Their efforts were rewarded by a higher level of community participation and by recognition from the Federal Highway Administration in 2007 with the Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives Award, presented for enhancement of public education efforts in the development of highway projects.

The Environmental Division created “Oh, Do You Know Where This Road Will Go?”—a program designed to reach out to school-age children to get them, and through them their communities, engaged in transportation projects. MDOT partnered with the Columbus Public School District and with local elected officials to establish a pilot program in conjunction with the U.S. Highway 45 Bypass Environmental Study in Columbus, Mississippi. MDOT provided

educators with a timeline of classroom activities and events that mirrored the environmental process for the proposed bypass. A town model was used to demonstrate the impacts of a transportation project on the natural and built environments. Teacher-led activities such as role-playing representing all entities of a community, the study of aerial photography and map reading, an archeological dig, and the planning of a town meeting were integrated into the program. “Dr. Shelly,” an animated turtle, was used to explain the concepts involved with determining a new road location including balancing the needs of the human and natural environments. According to project manager Kim Thurman, “The children, teachers, and entire community were engaged in this program. We used sophisticated measurement methods to evaluate the program, but its effectiveness was clear to me when I saw one of the fifth grade students take his dad to the town model displayed at the public meeting and explain to him how the new bypass would impact their property.”

The MDOT Environmental Division has received inquiries from two countries and ten states about the innovative program, which could serve as a model for their own outreach efforts.



Mississippi Leaders Talk Transportation at MTI

Professionals representing more than 40 entities with an interest in transportation—state, local, and federal agencies; universities; and professional associations—gather biennially at the Mississippi Transportation Institute (MTI) conference to discuss ways to enhance Mississippi's transportation system. At a time when there are limited funds nationwide for transportation projects, the impetus is even greater to gather the best and the brightest in the industry to work together to secure needed funding, share new technology, and develop innovative ideas for more cost-efficient roadway expansions and improvements.

MTI sessions include technical programs to inform transportation leaders of the newest technology and industry trends, as well as professional development programs.

To honor individuals who strongly support and promote the transportation community in Mississippi, the Owen Cooper Award is presented during the conference. The obstacles faced by the transportation industry today are in many ways reflective of the challenges faced by Owen Cooper. When the country faced tough economic problems after the Great Depression and World War II, Owen Cooper challenged Mississippians to band together to solve those problems. Mississippians owe much of their ease of travel to the efforts of Owen Cooper. He was a guiding force behind AHEAD (Advocating Highways for Economic Advancement and Development), the group of business, agricultural, and professional leaders dedicated to building a four-lane highway system throughout the state.

Previous recipients of the Owen Cooper Award include: Mr. John David Pennebaker (1998), Mr. Gil Carmichael (2000), Mr. John Tabb (2002), Mr. Tommy Wallace (2004), and Mr. Billy McCoy (2006). In 2008, the Owen Cooper Award was presented to U.S. Senator Thad Cochran.

The partnerships and innovation spurred by MTI continue to help Mississippi meet its evolving transportation needs.

MSTI Introduces Exceptional Students to Transportation Careers

In FY 2008, 25 exceptional students from across the state graduated from the Mississippi Summer Transportation Institute (MSTI), one of MDOT's most successful educational outreach programs. MDOT introduced the program in 1995 to expose high school students to real-world applications of science, math, engineering, and technology in the transportation industry. MDOT partnered with the Federal Highway Administration; Ergon; Intergraph Corporation; the ARTBA state chapter affiliate of the Mississippi Road Builders Association; the MSU Center for Science, Mathematics and Technology; the Bagley College of Engineering; the Appalachian Leadership Honors Program; and others to introduce students to a wide range of potential transportation careers.

Held this year on the campuses of Mississippi State University and Alcorn State University, the three-week programs featured a rigorous technical curriculum, hands-on learning in a fun and competitive environment, and field trips to see technical concepts applied in real life. Students learned about various modes within the transportation industry such as aviation, highway, ports and waterways, and rail systems. The students worked with surveying equipment, computer programs, and other engineering tools to complete projects such as building bridges and learning how to make flexible, lightweight concrete.

MSTI has proven to be highly effective in enhancing leadership skills and reinforcing teamwork. Formal surveys and program assessments have confirmed that MSTI encourages students to take more math and science courses and pursue careers in civil engineering and related fields.

MSTI is one of MDOT's most effective tools in preparing a highly-trained and dedicated workforce for the future.

Goal Finance

Updated Procedures and Practice Enhance Emergency Preparedness

As part of our ongoing emergency operations, MDOT has updated many of the procedures for capturing costs associated with natural disasters and has subsequently distributed those updates to the districts and divisions involved in emergency preparedness. The districts and the Office of Administrative Services and its partners in other divisions initiated new policies and procedures for accounting for costs associated with natural disasters. Financial Management is the lead division for implementing updates to these policies and procedures. FMD has a site on the MDOT intranet detailing these new procedures. FMD enlisted the assistance of the Maintenance Division, Budget Division, Procurement Division, Office of Law Enforcement, Facilities and Records Management Division, and General Services Division when making these updates. FMD also utilized the expertise in the districts for input regarding these updates. These measures are expected to simplify and expedite the reimbursement process in the event of future emergencies and are a direct result of lessons learned in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.



New Tools: Toll Roads and Public-Private Partnerships

In the 2007 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 2375 (MS Code of 1972, Section 65-43-1 through 39) passed. This bill was the enabling legislation for tolling in Mississippi. In the 2008 First Extraordinary Legislative Session, House Bill 3 (MS Code of 1972, Section 65-43-4 and Section 65-43-71 through 83) amended this statute and other applicable provisions of the Mississippi Code to extend the maximum contract term length, provide for an enforcement and collection system, and clarify property tax exemptions relating to toll roads. Together, this legislation provides MDOT with the statutory authority to construct, operate, and maintain new toll roads and/or bridges in the state as well as to contract with any entities licensed to do business in the state for the purpose of designing, financing, constructing, operating, and maintaining new toll roads and/or bridges. Toll Roads and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP) are another innovative funding mechanism that MDOT can use to advance the state's transportation initiatives.

With strong legislation creating a supportive environment for PPP opportunities in Mississippi, MDOT immediately began to assemble a first-class team of employees and nationally-recognized PPP experts in order to create a PPP framework for the state and undertake its first PPP project.

In June 2008, MDOT initiated its first PPP procurement process to develop, construct, finance, operate, and maintain a new 12-mile toll road facility known as the Airport Parkway Project. It will begin just east of downtown Jackson and extend to the city's eastern suburbs and Jackson International Airport. The toll road presents a strong value proposition, connecting downtown with the fast-growing suburban population to the east.



MDOT's PPP procurement uses a two-step process to select a shortlisted responder with whom to execute a contract for the Airport Parkway Project. The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is the first step in the process. After evaluation and scoring of responsive Statements of Qualifications, MDOT shortlisted three teams in August 2008: Jackson Access Mobility Group (ACS and Dragados), Airport Parkway P3 Group (Cintra and Ferrovial), and Global Via. Strong interest by these top caliber teams is a clear signal that the private sector is ready to invest in transportation in Mississippi.

The second step of the PPP procurement process is the Request for Proposal (RFP) stage. MDOT will issue the final RFP to the shortlisted teams in January 2009 with proposals due March 2009. MDOT expects to close its first PPP by July 2009.

As a first-time opportunity in the state, the Airport Parkway Project will establish the PPP framework that may serve as the basis for additional toll road PPP projects elsewhere in Mississippi.

H.E.L.P. Program Accelerates Projects

MDOT has accelerated \$407 million in highway projects through its innovative financing program entitled Highway Enhancement through Local Partnerships (H.E.L.P.). By leveraging available funding, these projects will be completed and be providing mobility and economic development benefits years before they could otherwise be launched.

Through the H.E.L.P. program, authorized by state statute, MDOT enters into cooperative agreements with cities or counties to accelerate planned Federal-Aid-eligible interstate highway projects in their area. The city or county where the project is located issues bonds to finance the much-needed highway improvements. MDOT repays the debt, most of which is reimbursed by the FHWA.

Commercial Paper Program Improves Cash Flow

MDOT has at its disposal a \$100 million Commercial Paper Program that provides cash flow to keep MDOT's robust construction program advancing at full speed during the busy summer construction season, even though federal funding schedules and state tax collections do not always correspond to seasonal variations in MDOT's obligations. Although MDOT did not need to utilize the Commercial Paper Program in FY 2008, it remains another tool in the MDOT financing tool box.

Financing Equipment Purchases for the Best Value

MDOT uses several methods for purchasing equipment in addition to the equipment budget established in the annual Appropriations Bill. By having several methods available for purchasing equipment, MDOT is able to use the taxpayer's dollar most efficiently.

MDOT retains the proceeds from the sale of used equipment and from insurance reimbursements in an "equipment revolving fund." In accordance with state law, these proceeds are used only for the purchase of new equipment. MDOT also utilizes the state's Master Lease Purchase program, which is regulated by the Department of Finance and Administration. The Master Lease Purchase program is comparable to a term loan, and enables MDOT to purchase high-cost equipment without depleting the annual equipment budget. Finally, MDOT utilizes a "buyback" program through which a vendor guarantees to buy back equipment

at an established minimum amount at the end of a three-, four-, or five-year term. MDOT selects a vendor based on the lowest annual cost to own the item, rather than on low bid alone. At the conclusion of the buyback term, MDOT has the option to sell the equipment at auction as long as the proceeds exceed the guaranteed buyback amount. This program is ideal for equipment with a high resale value. MDOT analyzes the yearly cost of operating equipment purchased by each of these available methods for determining the method that will provide the best value.

In FY 2008, the Asset Management and Procurement divisions teamed to obtain and implement Auction Services Contracts for selling some of the more specialized equipment, which has a limited local market. By selling this equipment through professional auction companies, MDOT realized a significant increase in the rate of return as compared to conducting our own in-house equipment auctions. For example, a road grader with an average 30.95 percent return on investment through in-house equipment auctions brought a 72.07 percent return on investment when sold through a professional auction company. The average return on investment for bulldozers sold through in-house auctions is 25.80 percent, as compared to 36.22 percent when sold through a professional auction company. On-line internet bidding is a requirement of the auction services providers and increases the pool of potential bidders. This increased return on investment from the sale of equipment generates much-needed funds for purchasing new equipment, thus better enabling MDOT to maintain and preserve Mississippi's transportation system.





Equipment Management System Facilitates Comprehensive Monitoring

The passage of Senate Bill 2398 during the 2006 Legislative Session resulted in the formation of the Bureau of Fleet Management (Fleet Management) within the Office of Purchasing, Travel, and Fleet Management of Mississippi's Department of Finance and Administration. It exists "for the purposes of coordinating and promoting efficiency and economy in the purchase, lease, rental, acquisition, use, maintenance, and disposal of vehicles by state agencies." Among its many functions, Fleet Management was charged with encouraging the use of fuel-efficient or hybrid vehicles appropriate for the state agency's intended purpose, and, when feasible, the use of alternative fuels. For the past few years, MDOT has been one of the lead agencies in complying with federal alternative fuel vehicle requirements.

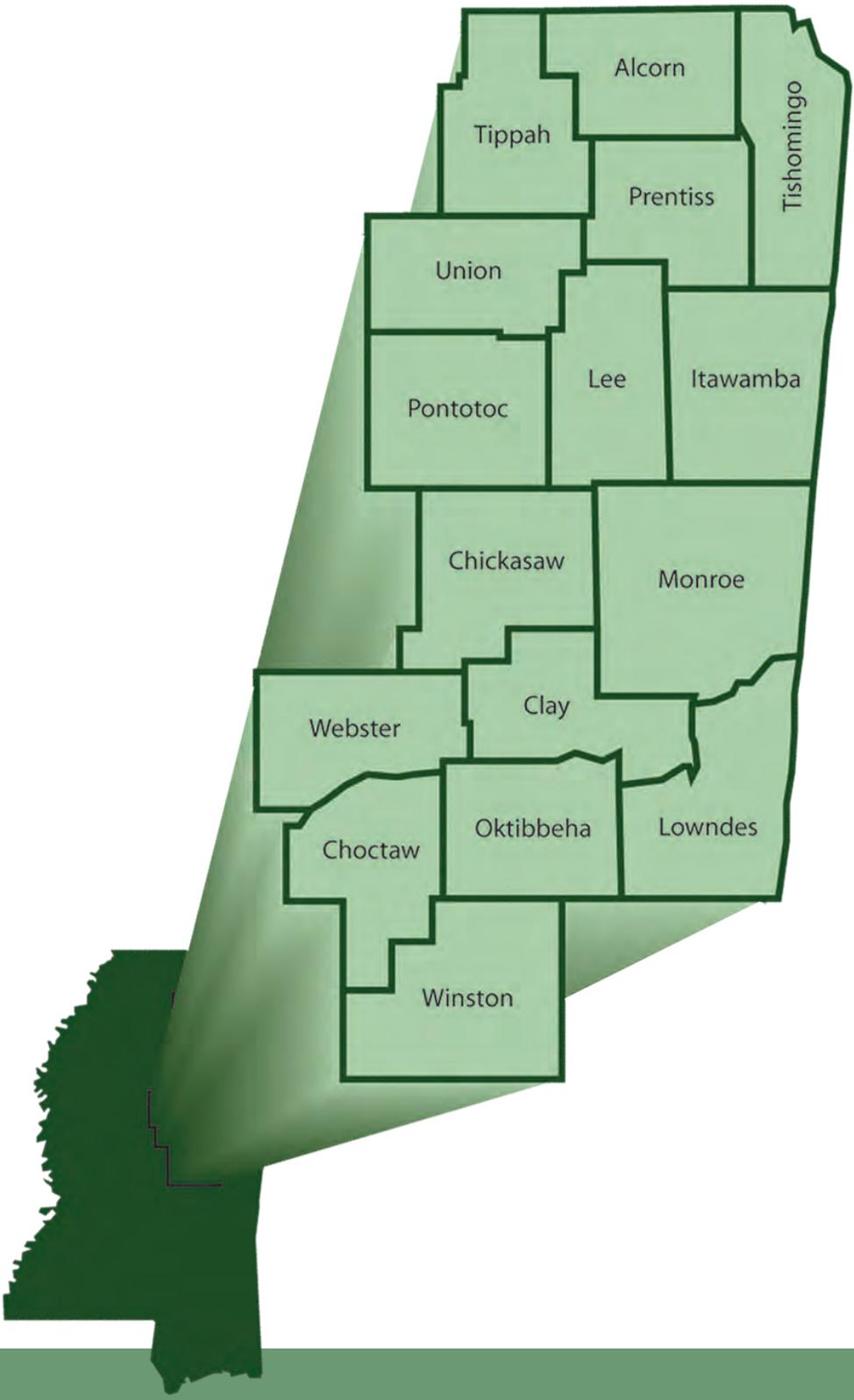
MDOT's Asset Management, General Services, Financial Management, and Information Systems divisions have teamed to implement an Equipment Management System (EMS) that will go a step further than the Fleet Management system. EMS will monitor all equipment—not only vehicles—from purchase through maintenance and repairs to disposal. EMS will enable MDOT to schedule periodic maintenance such as oil changes and will prompt users of the equipment in advance

of needed maintenance. It will enable MDOT to report repairs completed under warranty or as problems occur, thus enabling the evaluation of makes/models/manufacturers for future purchases and the compilation of better data on the actual cost of the equipment or vehicles.

Fleet Management was also required to implement software to monitor the size, use, maintenance, and disposal of the state's fleet of vehicles. MDOT is working with Fleet Management to create an interface between MDOT's existing Financial Management System and the new Fleet Management System. The two agencies are working closely to ensure that information currently maintained within MDOT's Financial Management System meets these requirements, including the cleanup of existing data to match Fleet Management's format.

The ability to track periodic maintenance will also document compliance with any maintenance requirements of equipment purchased through the "buyback" method. Historical records of vehicles and equipment will be maintained electronically, reducing the need to store folders and files of paper. EMS will be accessible to all divisions and districts within MDOT, thus information will be readily available for equipment that is shared or transferred within the agency.

MDOT anticipates full system implementation in February 2009.



Alcorn

Tippah

Prentiss

Tishomingo

Union

Lee

Itawamba

Pontotoc

Chickasaw

Monroe

Webster

Clay

Choctaw

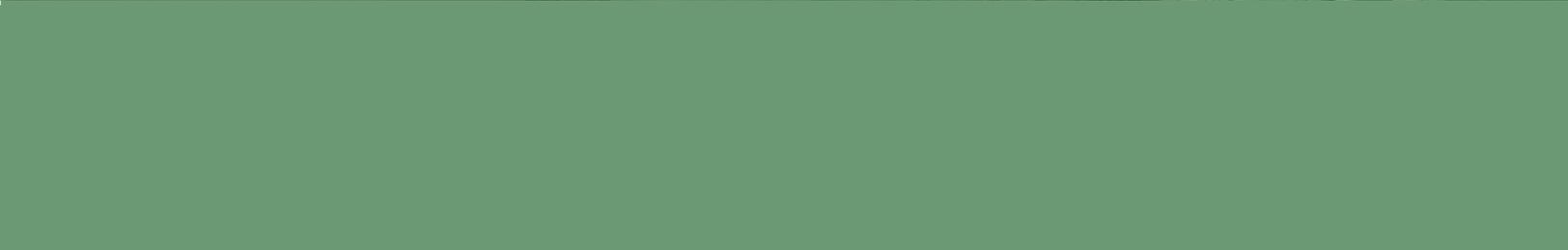
Oktibbeha

Lowndes

Winston

1

District





DISTRICT 1 PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from Bill Jamieson, District Engineer



On FY 2008 accomplishments

We have several projects under way or recently completed that are bringing jobs and related economic development to our District.

Interstate designation is a key component in attracting manufacturers and other industry to Northeast Mississippi. We have recently completed 15 miles of overlay on U.S. Highway 78 from New Albany to Belden, which is the first step of a program to upgrade the highway to interstate standards.

A frontage road system along U.S. Highway 78 that links a future Toyota plant site with U.S. Highway 78 (Future I-22) and other area highways is under construction, with the stretch in front of the plant completed in December 2008. MDOT's ability to provide highway access was a major factor in Toyota's selection of the Blue Springs site.

In Lowndes County a recently-completed widening project on SR 791 is improving access to the SeverCorr steel mill and helped to attract a new Paccar Engine Company plant.

On employees "just doing their job"

Our employees demonstrate compassion and generosity throughout the year. It's important to us to look out for members of our own MDOT family—especially during the holidays—as we donate food and other gifts to fellow employees who are dealing with especially difficult circumstances. We're active in fundraising for causes such as muscular dystrophy, and our employees help countless members of the public who encounter car trouble or other issues while on the road.

Several of our engineers invest substantial time working with young students to introduce them to civil engineering and other transportation careers.

They assist with MDOT's TRAC, RIDES, and CARS educational outreach programs, which are available to elementary and middle school teachers and students statewide. In fact, my wife is a teacher and has gone through MDOT's RIDES program training. She has been impressed by the way the activities show students real-world applications for math and science concepts and make learning fun. Matt Dunn, Assistant District Maintenance Engineer, has been especially devoted to assisting the Tupelo Middle School TRAC students in model bridge-building contests. They have a great time learning about bridge design and have won national awards several years in a row.

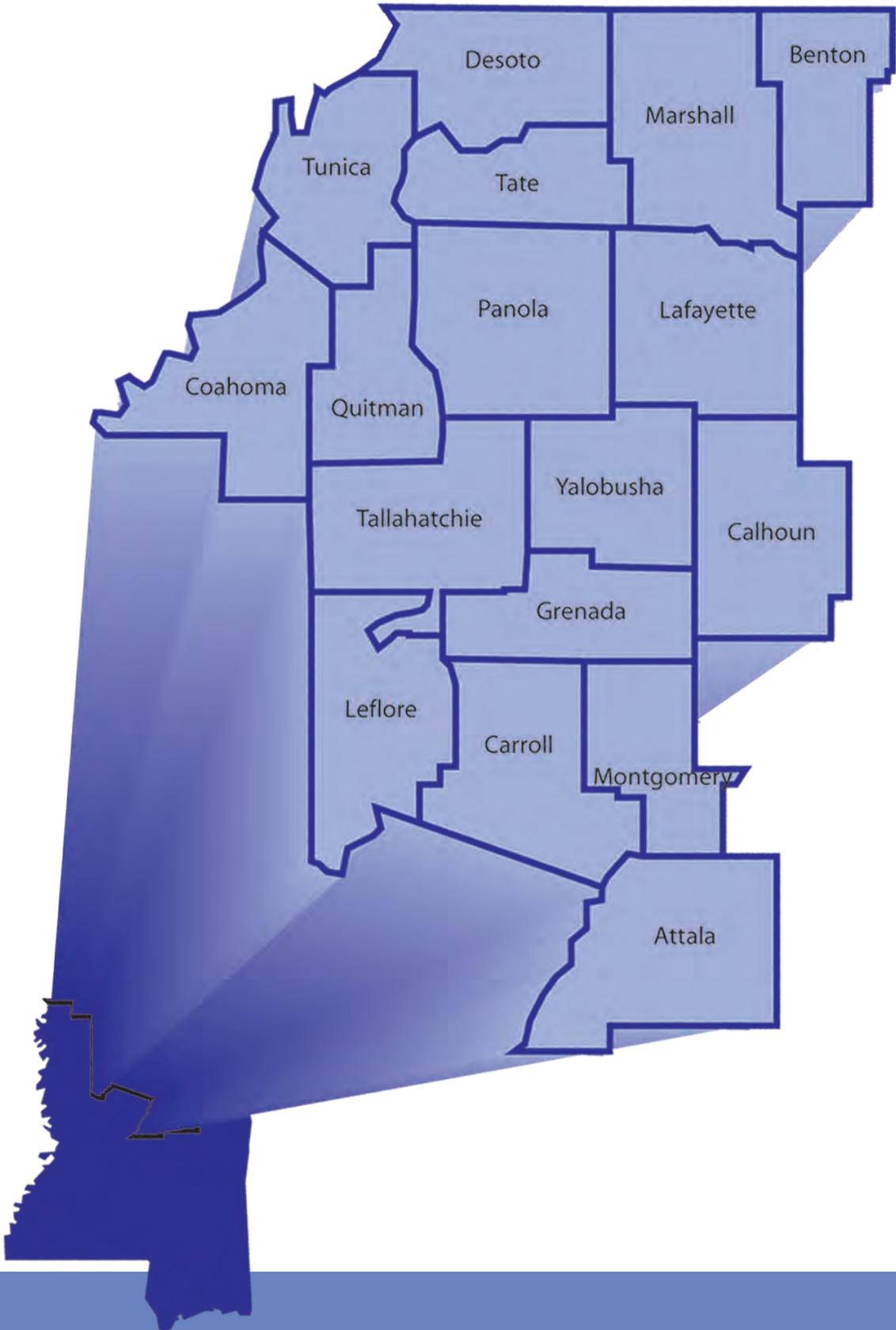
On positive changes

We are developing highways and related projects at a much faster pace than we were able to just a few decades ago. Improvements in equipment, technology, and communications help us accomplish much more with fewer people. Our lane miles in District 1 have nearly doubled through the 1987 Four-Lane program, but we have the same number of employees.

On the future

I-269 is a major multi-year project with segments in District 1 and District 2. We will be working to acquire right-of-way and relocate utilities along that corridor to clear the way for construction.

Continued professional development of our staff will be a priority to ensure that we can meet tomorrow's challenges.



Desoto

Benton

Tunica

Marshall

Tate

Panola

Lafayette

Coahoma

Quitman

Yalobusha

Tallahatchie

Calhoun

Grenada

Leflore

Carroll

Montgomery

Attala

District





DISTRICT 2 PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from Richard Allen, District Engineer



On FY 2008 accomplishments

Preliminary engineering and right-of-way development for I-269 was a major emphasis this year. This 28.5-mile interstate corridor from I-55 at Hernando to SR 385 in Tennessee will be part of a Memphis bypass that will improve access and mobility for residents of Mississippi as well as Tennesseans and through travelers. Right-of-way plan development involves significant coordination with local officials, businesses, and landowners, who each have individual interests and concerns.

Bridge maintenance was another priority, and we completed several bridge replacement projects as well as overlay work and truss painting to extend the life of various structures. We also installed guardrail on a significant number of bridges district-wide.

Renovations to the Vaiden rest area on I-55 in Carroll County are completed, with interior and exterior improvements to the building and grounds to better serve motorists.

On positive changes

MDOT has implemented focused programs to develop the potential of employees at all levels and in all disciplines. Those programs enhance productivity and help us retain talented, committed workers. Productivity is also boosted by improvements in our facilities, equipment, and technology.

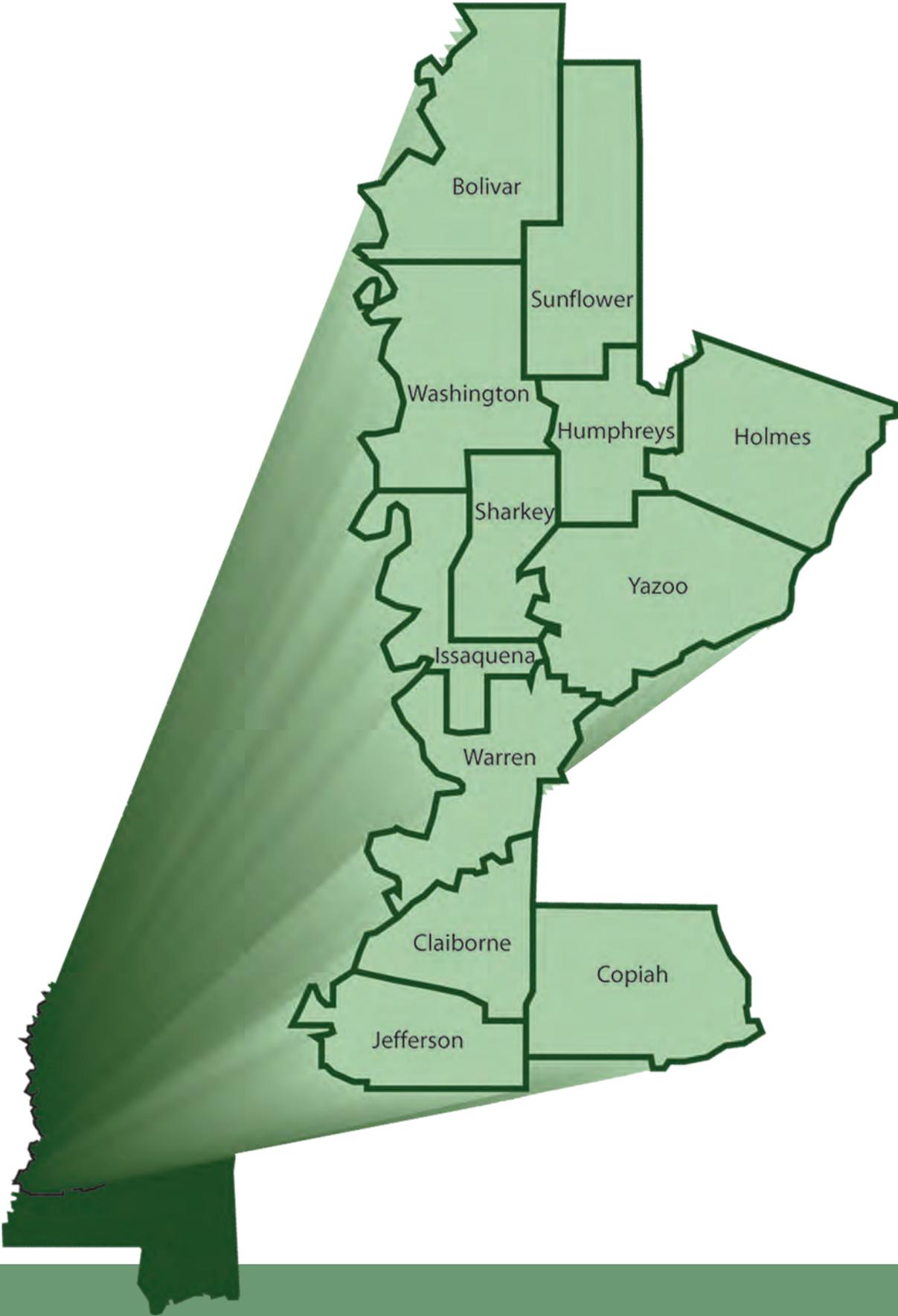
On employees “just doing their job”

Our employees are truly public servants. One example is Richard Kappenman, Operations Superintendent for equipment and signal operations, who worked exceptionally hard to ensure that our Career Construction Fair was a success. The event is an MDOT outreach program to make students aware of the wide range of careers available in the transportation industry. Richard recruited and organized volunteers; secured the site for the fair; and coordinated the equipment, tents, tables, and other materials as needed.

We have an excellent employee response to blood drives, toy drives, and food drives to help some of our own MDOT families during the Thanksgiving season.

On the future

Right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and the eventual construction of I-269 will be a major focus for the coming years. Also, SR 6/U.S. 278 from Batesville to Clarksdale is beginning to take shape. This 40-mile improved corridor will provide an east-west link from the Delta region to I-55 to boost economic development and improve safety. With the environmental process behind us, we will be focusing on design, right-of-way acquisition, and utility relocation in preparation for construction.



Bolivar

Sunflower

Washington

Humphreys

Holmes

Sharkey

Yazoo

Issaquena

Warren

Claiborne

Covich

Jefferson

District





DISTRICT 3 PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from Kevin Magee, District Engineer



On FY 2008 accomplishments

The Greenville Bridge and U.S. 82 Bypass in Washington County continue to be our biggest projects and represent a significant transportation improvement for the whole Delta area. U.S. 82 is a major east-west route and the Greenville Bridge, which carries U.S. 82 over the Mississippi River, is one of the few river crossings in the region.

Work is complete on the Mississippi approach to the bridge, and in 2009 we expect to complete the Arkansas approach. In FY 2008 we began construction on the first of four phases of the bypass—six miles of four-lane highway and two interchanges.

We also made substantial progress on construction of the new Yazoo River Bridge in Warren County, which is about 85 percent complete and slated for opening in late spring 2009. The new concrete bridge will be wider and safer and will accommodate oversized loads, so drivers on U.S. 61 will no longer have to go 100 miles out of their way to cross the Yazoo River.

On positive changes

MDOT's relationship with our contractors has changed dramatically over recent years. Instead of an "us versus them" mindset, both sides have worked in formal and informal ways to become partners in solving problems and getting projects built. A few years ago MDOT instituted a formal partnering process which started the emphasis on collaboration. It really comes down to the inspectors and engineers in the field understanding that it is their responsibility to get the project completed, and they need to use the contractors effectively as a resource to achieve that goal. Ultimately, a sense of partnership allows us to accomplish more and use our time and money to the greatest effect.

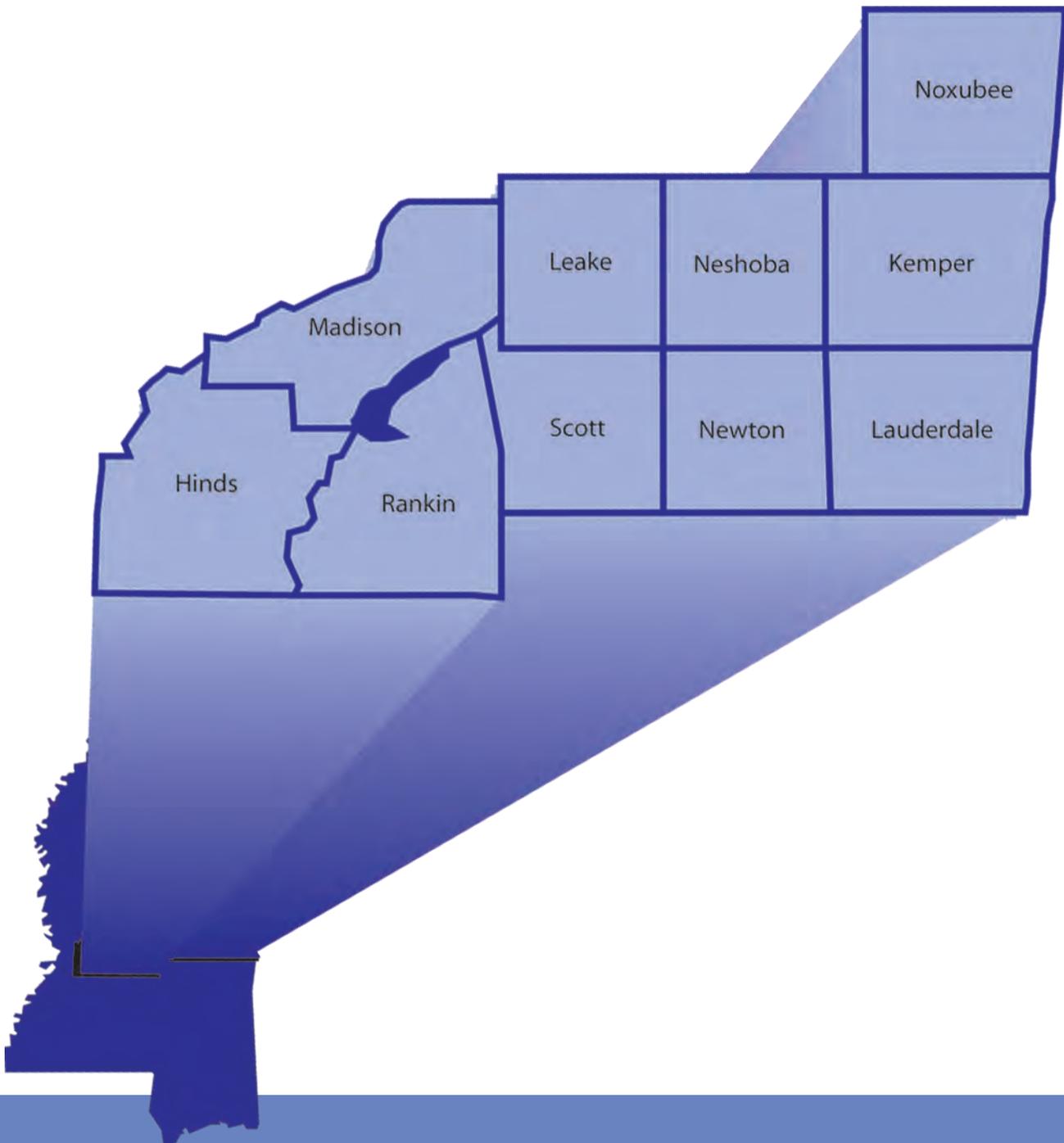
On employees "just doing their job"

During Hurricane Gustav, Contraflow was set up on I-55 in the southern part of the state. Although traffic flow is returned to the normal configuration before reaching District 3, when Contraflow is in effect the rest area on I-55 in Copiah County is one of the first opportunities travelers have to use the restroom and attend to other needs. At the height of the evacuation, we counted 3,300 vehicles per hour stopping at the rest area! Our maintenance people worked around the clock to look out for the safety and security of travelers and ensure that the rest area was clean and usable. They did whatever was needed to get travelers on their way to continue on their evacuation.

Even north of Jackson our relatively small rest area in West Mississippi was inundated. We had additional staff there around the clock keeping everything in order. The credit goes to our maintenance crews who identified this overwhelming rest area traffic as a potential issue and were prepared to deal with it.

On the future

We will need to put an increasing emphasis on taking care of the roads and bridges we already have. In the past we have had major four-lane highway construction programs and we will continue to expand our system. However, with today's high costs for construction materials and fuel, along with declining transportation revenue, we first must be sure we can properly maintain our existing infrastructure. MDOT is implementing a performance-based maintenance management system that will help us comprehensively track the condition of our roads, bridges, and other assets, and prioritize our maintenance work accordingly so that the funds we do receive go where they provide the most value.



Hinds

Madison

Rankin

Leake

Neshoba

Kemper

Scott

Newton

Lauderdale

Noxubee

District





DISTRICT 5 PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from Ricky May, District Engineer



On FY 2008 accomplishments

The STACK in Jackson is one of our major projects, and Phase III was completed this year. It connects I-20 with I-55 North and U.S. Highway 49 South, improving safety and traffic flow. Also in Jackson we installed dynamic message signs at key locations in the metropolitan area, which enables us to advise motorists of congested areas, accidents, construction, or other incidents.

We upgraded guardrail district-wide and installed cable rail barrier on I-220. Construction began on two major highway widening projects. Additional lanes are being added on I-55 just north of Jackson from County Line Road past the SR 463 interchange. As part of the Vision 21 program, we are widening U.S. Highway 19 to four lanes between Meridian and Philadelphia. In FY 2008 the first segment (Collinsville to the Newton County Line) went to contract.

On positive changes

We are accomplishing more, despite having less funding and fewer employees. It is not easy, but we manage because of our dedicated employees and technological advances that allow us to work more efficiently.

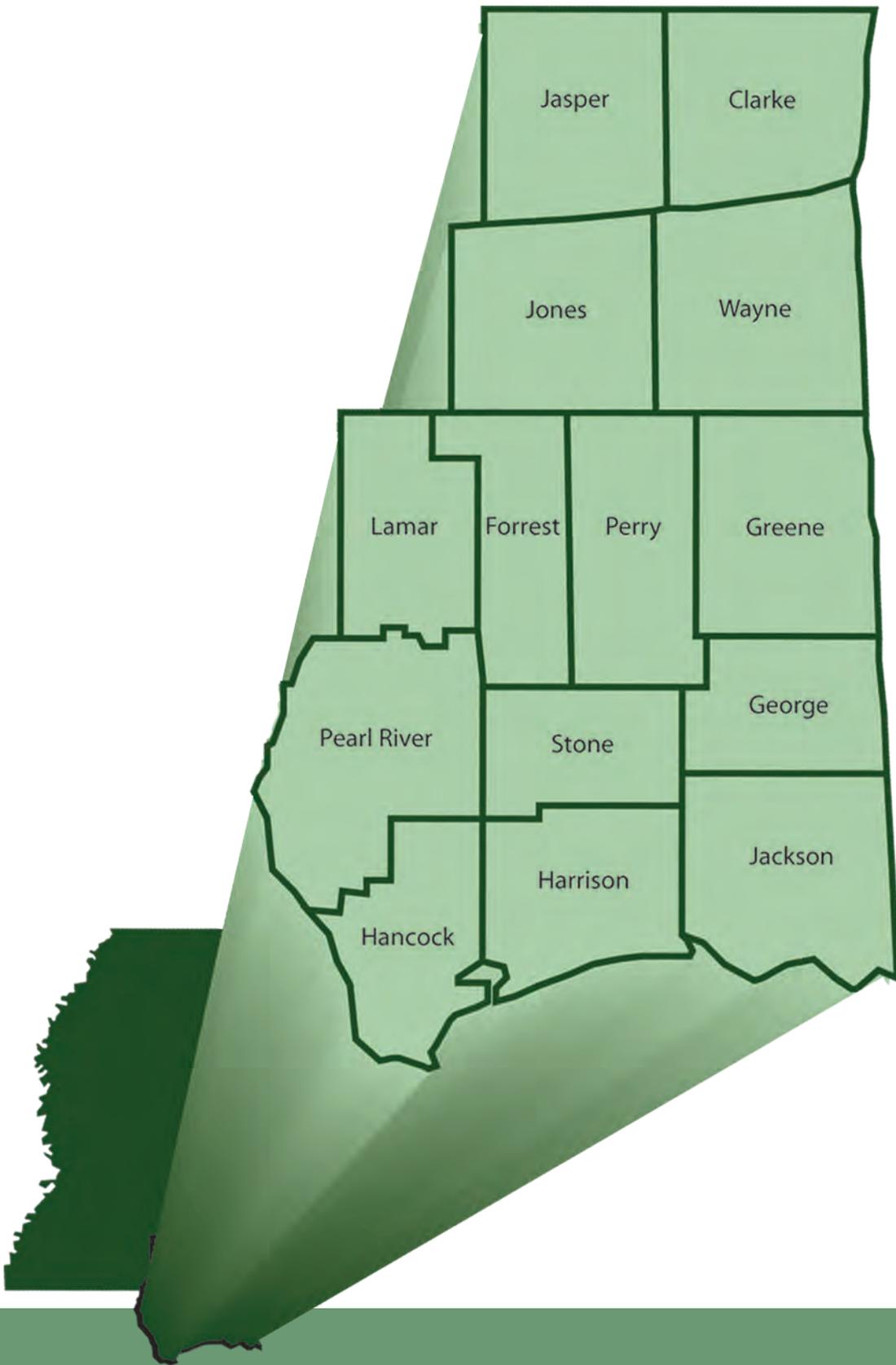
On employees “just doing their job”

In an effort to minimize disruptions to traffic, work on MDOT’s construction projects in urban areas is done at night. Although that schedule is more convenient for the public, it requires personnel in our project offices to rearrange their lifestyles. It is not easy on them or their families, but they have done a great job—even when unexpected situations arise. The maintenance personnel throughout the District are on call around the clock seven days a week, and emergencies have a way of happening at the most inconvenient times - as does inclement weather.

Even when our employees are off duty and on their way home, they don’t hesitate to stop and help travelers. Many of our employees have been commended by motorists who were deeply appreciative of their friendliness and assistance.

On the future

Having less funding and fewer employees does impose limits on our ability to maintain the transportation system. Our infrastructure is aging and we must invest in substantial maintenance now in order to preserve it for the future. But amid the current trends of escalating costs, increased traffic demand, and decreased funding, needs will continue to outpace resources. The state and the nation are at a critical point in time where decisions, priorities, and funding sources established now will have an effect for many years to come as bridges and pavements reach the end of their designed life cycle.



Jasper

Clarke

Jones

Wayne

Lamar

Forrest

Perry

Greene

Pearl River

Stone

George

Hancock

Harrison

Jackson

District





DISTRICT 6 PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from Steve Twedt, District Engineer

On FY 2008 accomplishments

The completion of the Bay of St. Louis Bridge and the Biloxi Bay Bridge were extraordinary accomplishments, and we are proud of the way the communities have embraced those bridges. We are in the process of installing the work of local artists—which has been rendered into bronze plaques—along the pedestrian pathways. The bicycle and pedestrian lane of each bridge sees significant use, with many residents choosing to enjoy the coastal route at a slower pace.

Traffic is now on the new section of I-59 near Laurel, eliminating the old “S-curve” and greatly improving safety. Next, contractors will remove the old highway segment and complete two associated ramps.

And in FY 2008 we achieved another major milestone—all of our projects under the original 1987 Four-Lane Program are either complete or under contract.

On employees “just doing their job”

Hurricane Gustav in September 2008 put our employees to the test, and I am very proud of how they responded. Our maintenance forces worked long hours—along with District 7 and law enforcement personnel—to implement Contraflow in record time on I-55 and I-59. They were prepared and proficient in placing barricades and other traffic control devices, programming variable message signs, modifying traffic signals, and safely reversing traffic flow on the interstates. They monitored the evacuation

and assisted motorists, and then returned the traffic configuration to normal and secured all equipment before Gustav made landfall. And after all that work, most were out again as soon as the worst of the storm was over, clearing debris, inspecting highways and bridges, and restoring traffic flow as soon as possible. We have a dedicated, talented group of employees and they are a credit to Mississippi.

On positive changes

New technology is enabling us to better manage our highways and improve performance without necessarily undertaking costly and disruptive construction projects. Our traffic operations center in Hattiesburg and a new one to open in Gulfport use advanced technology linked via fiber optic cable to monitor traffic conditions and adjust signals remotely to improve traffic flow. On Highway 90 along the coast, we worked with MDOT’s Traffic Engineering Division to install an award-winning wireless system to reduce the vulnerability of traffic control devices to storms.

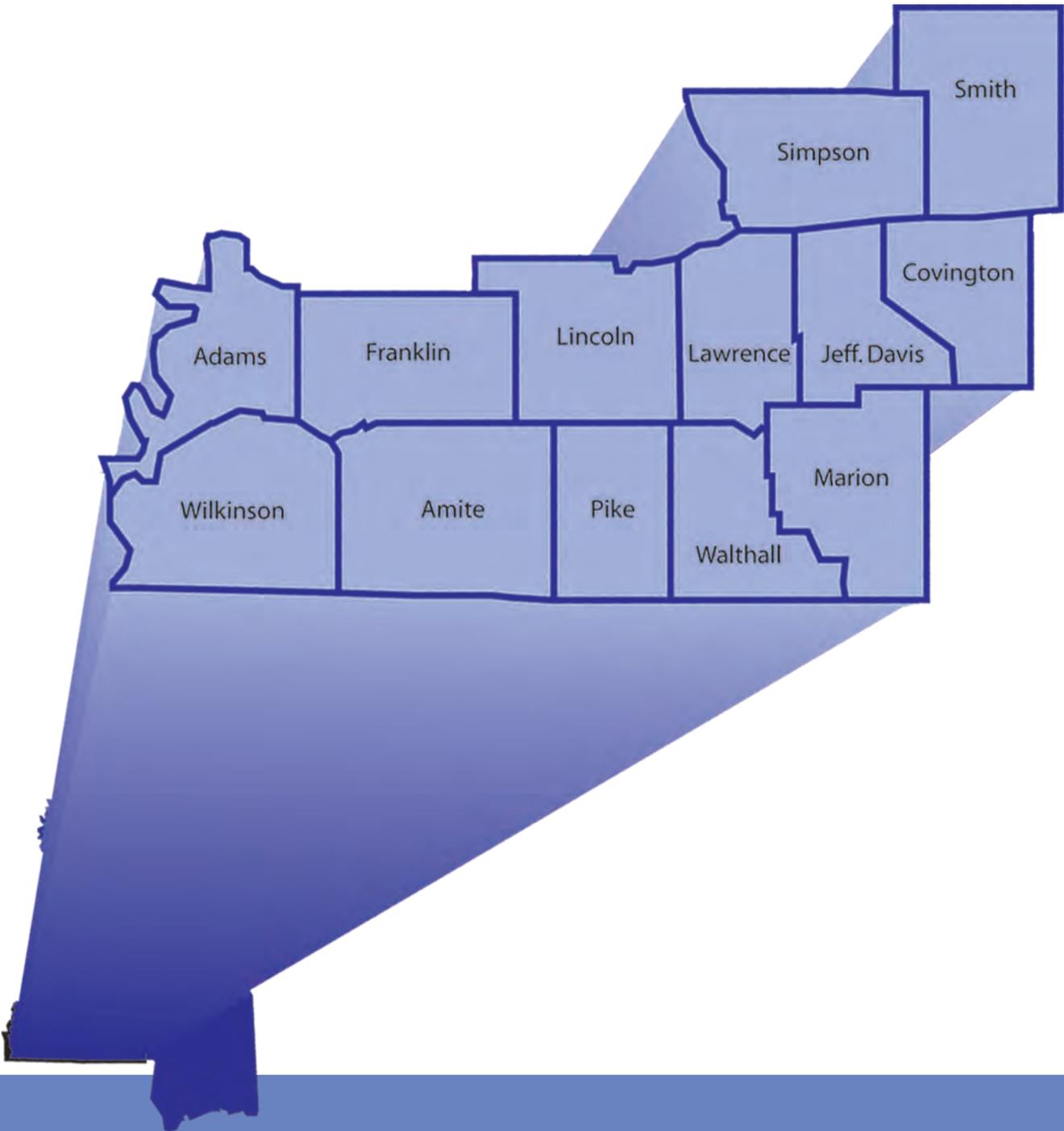
On the less technical side, we’ve been successful in expanding public involvement in the project development process. Proactive outreach pays off because when people know what we are doing and why, and have the opportunity to help shape transportation plans, it results in more successful projects.



On the future

Continuing to meet the needs of the traveling public within limited resources will be an ongoing challenge. With revenue flat and costs increasing, an increasing proportion of our budget goes to maintenance. That means, for example, we may not have the money to add lanes in a congested area.

But by using technology to make intersections operate more efficiently, we can often defer costly expansion projects. MDOT also researches and tests various methods of extending the life of pavement, such as using scrub seals and thin lift overlays, to get as many years as possible out of a roadway before reconstruction is necessary.



Adams

Franklin

Lincoln

Lawrence

Jeff. Davis

Smith

Simpson

Covington

Wilkinson

Amite

Pike

Marion

Walthall

District





DISTRICT 7 PERSPECTIVE

Thoughts from Darrell Broome, District Engineer

On FY 2008 accomplishments

The Liberty Road Bridge and Interchange in Natchez was completed in October 2007 and has greatly reduced congestion and improved safety. It replaced a 40-year-old bridge that was never designed for the ever-increasing volume of traffic traveling over it every day. The project included a new half-cloverleaf interchange at U.S. Highway 61 and historic Liberty Road to more evenly disperse the flow of area traffic. This area serves as a gateway to Natchez at the end of the Natchez Trace Parkway, so special attention was given to the aesthetic design of the two-span bridge that carries six lanes of U.S. Highway 61. The project includes decorative lighting and landscaping and has greatly benefited Natchez.

On positive changes

Increasingly we are providing employees with a greater understanding of the overall project development process—how a project evolves from an idea to a finished roadway or bridge. That knowledge and the opportunity to participate in more phases of project development helps employees understand how their specific job fits into the big picture. It makes their work more interesting and satisfying and enables them to be more effective. Some of that context is provided through formal training, but much is through on-the-job opportunities and mentoring.

On employees “just doing their job”

The evening before Contraflow was implemented in anticipation of Hurricane Gustav, we deployed our shop mechanics to provide roadside assistance along I-55 to Louisiana and Mississippi motorists evacuating the area. The service continued through Contraflow, and we saw a lot of relieved faces as our trusted MDOT crews got cars moving again or called tow trucks and helped drivers continue on their way. After the storm, a number of our construction employees assisted District 6 in cleanup and repairs along U.S. Highway 90. Everyone pulled together to do what was needed to open the roads and restore traffic flow.

Another good deed that is typical of our employees happened to involve our retired District Engineer, Walter Lyons. He stopped at a rest area and tried to buy a bottle of water, but the machine took his money without dispensing the bottle. He knew the next person to put money in the machine would receive two bottles. After Mr. Lyons went back to his car, Dudley May, one of our maintenance employees, approached him with two bottles of water. “Sir, I believe one of these is yours,” Dudley said. Dudley had no idea who Mr. Lyons was, and in fact he had a water cooler with him and didn’t need to buy a bottle—but he observed the situation and wanted to do what he could to help a member of the public. It may have been a small matter but it shows what kind of people our employees are. And that is only one of many, many examples of our employees being Good Samaritans.

We also appreciate the hard work of Administrative Assistant Robyn Jordan to coordinate blood drives, our Toys for Tots collection, and our bell-ringing for the Salvation Army.



On the future

The reduced purchasing power of our budget is both a challenge and an opportunity, as we continually seek ways to work more efficiently, streamline projects, use new technology to save time and money, and complete construction projects in the shortest time possible. Of course, even at top efficiency there are still more

transportation needs than dollars to address them. We carefully analyze how we could put potential funding to best use to address the most pressing safety or congestion issues. We also invest in training our people to stay at the forefront of technology, which ultimately enables them to accomplish more with available resources.

Awards

Special honors and recognition validate the Mississippi Department of Transportation's commitment to excellence. In 2008 MDOT and its employees received regional and national awards both in the field of transportation and for service to the citizens of Mississippi. Among those awards are:



MDOT employees at the People's Choice rally

— The Bay of St. Louis Bridge won the People's Choice Award in the America's Transportation Award competition sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The project was one of 10 selected to compete for national honors from a field of 41 regional winners across the U.S. The competition for the People's Choice Award saw more than 55,500 votes cast on-line and at the AASHTO Annual Meeting in Hartford, CT.

— The Bay of St. Louis Bridge was recognized by AASHTO as a winner in the America's Transportation Award's On-Time category for projects over \$200 million. This award recognizes a project that demonstrates specific measurement, process management, and quality assurance methods used to deliver a quality product and demonstrate effective schedule management from conception to completion. This award also demonstrates involvement and interaction with the surrounding community and illustrates the degree to which traffic movement was improved for customers/users.

— The Biloxi Bay Bridge tied for first place in the America's Transportation Award's Innovative Management category for projects over \$200 million. AASHTO annually presents this award to highlight innovation, technology, and transportation solutions that improve safety, relieve congestion, improve access to jobs or schools, and enhance quality of life.



Biloxi Bay Bridge

— The Biloxi Bay Bridge earned the Award of Excellence in the Project Management category of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) 2008 Excellence in Highway Design Biennial Awards. The project management was characterized by rapid and effective decision-making, continuous communication, and "doing it right" the first time.

— The Liberty Road Interchange was awarded Honorable Mention in the FHWA 2008 Excellence in Highway Design Biennial Awards, in the Congestion Mitigation: Bottleneck Reduction category. The design for the new interchange includes a bridge wide enough to carry six lanes of U.S. 61 spanning over seven full lanes of Liberty Road. The bridge design and architectural elements mesh with the area's distinct historic character and serve as a "gateway" to the community.

— The Construction Management Association of America awarded MDOT and URS the 2008 Construction Management Project Achievement Award for the bridge replacements on U.S. 90. The award is designed to recognize and promote professionalism and excellence in the management of the construction process.

— The Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA) awarded MDOT the 2008 Transportation Owner of the Year Award for their innovative use of the design-build process in the reconstruction of the Biloxi Bay Bridge and the Bay of St. Louis



Regional Equipment Operators' "ROADEO" winners

Bridge. The Transportation Owner of the Year Award pays tribute to a Transportation organization that has made significant contributions in advancing awareness, understanding, and use of the design-build project delivery method.

— MDOT heavy equipment operators won first place in the Regional Equipment Operators' "Roadeo" in Asheville, NC. The event is an annual competition with heavy equipment operators from seven states demonstrating their skills and learning new techniques. The Regional Roadeo provides an opportunity for equipment operators from across the south to show off their skills while improving safety through hard work and practice.

— ITSA (Intelligent Transportation Systems – America) named MDOT's project to reconnect and improve the network of traffic signals along U.S. Highway 90 on the Gulf Coast a winner in the Best Innovative Practices category at the ITS World Congress. The new system will enable traffic engineers to maximize traffic flow through intersections. Through a connection with MDOT's mstraffic.com Web site, local public safety agencies will be able to monitor the interchanges through the site's network of traffic cameras and respond more quickly to accidents and other incidents.

— The strong partnership between MDOT and Keep Mississippi Beautiful (KMB) brought national attention to the state of Mississippi with

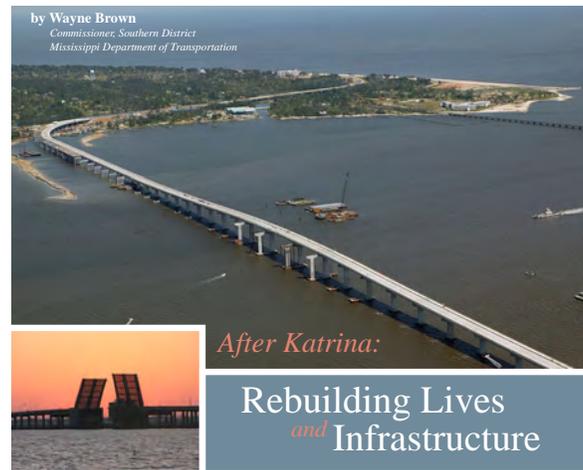


Retired District Engineer Richard "Ricky" Lee receiving the Distinguished Engineer Service Award

the presentation of three national awards by Keep America Beautiful. The awards were given in recognition of the MDOT/KMB partnership and MDOT's dedication and success in the Keep America Beautiful Great American Cleanup.

— Lisa Hancock and Jessica Younger have been recognized by the Mississippi Association of Governmental Purchasing and Property Agents (MAGPPA). Lisa Hancock, Director of Procurement, was named Purchasing Manager of the Year for her development of professional training programs to ensure an exceptionally trained staff in using the latest electronic solicitation bid module, which increases efficiency and saves taxpayer dollars. Jessica Younger, Asset Management, was named Property Officer of the Year. Jessica has earned all three levels of property certification, including Certified Professional Property Manager.

— Retired MDOT District 6 Engineer Richard "Ricky" Lee was awarded the Distinguished Engineering Service Award by the Mississippi Engineering Society. The award recognizes his career-long achievements in engineering. For 35 years, Lee served the public as a professional civil engineer and a trusted leader in the construction and maintenance of South Mississippi's transportation infrastructure. Following the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Lee was a leader in efforts to rebuild the highway system with a dedication to safety and fiscal responsibility.



Wilson Ruff, MDOT District 6 Materials Engineer, was named Mississippi Government Engineer of the Year by the Mississippi Engineering Society. The award recognizes Ruff’s exemplary contributions to the engineering profession and his leadership in ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public.

District 6 Special Projects Engineer Sharpie Smith was presented the Engineer of the Year Award by the Southeast Chapter of the Mississippi Engineering Society. Smith oversees administration of the federally-funded transportation program in the Forrest and Lamar county region, the Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and other cities in Southeast Mississippi.

The Outreach Division was recognized by the Public Relations Association of Mississippi (PRAM) with numerous awards at the 2008 PRAM Awards Banquet. Included in the awards were: “Passing the Baton: Communication Techniques for Developing Tomorrow’s Transportation Workforce,” a training handbook; “Secure Your Trash,” an anti-litter broadcast production; “Artists of the Coast, a Commemorative Coloring Book;” and “Reconnecting the Coast,” the special event celebrating the opening of the Bay of St. Louis Bridge and the Biloxi Bay Bridge.

The Southern Public Relations Federation (SPRF) recognized MDOT with its 2008 Award of Excellence for After Katrina: Rebuilding Lives and Infrastructure, a book authored by Mississippi Transportation Commissioner Wayne Brown. The book features photos and stories collected from residents on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

MDOT was honored with four 2008 SPRF Awards of Merit:

- “Reconnecting the Coast” – ceremonies and celebrations for the reopening of the two U.S. 90 bridges after Katrina
- “Secure Your Trash” – an anti-litter commercial produced in-house
- The Art and Artists of the Bay of St. Louis Bridge – a commemorative book featuring the artists whose work is a permanent part of the Bay of St. Louis Bridge pedestrian pathway
- Passing the Baton: Communication Techniques for Developing Tomorrow’s Workforce – a handbook of MDOT’s innovative workforce development and communication experiences. The handbook is authored by Danada McMurtry, Outreach Division Director.

The Southeast Concrete Alliance Network (SCAN) presented MDOT with the 2008 Quality Award for a whitetopping project in Meridian, Mississippi. The winning project is part of the I-20/I-59 interchange at 22nd Avenue. Whitetopping refers to placing a layer of concrete over asphalt to extend pavement life and reduce the rutting caused by heavy trucks at interchanges.

MDOT earned the Perpetual Pavement Award from the Asphalt Pavement Alliance for a 10.8-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 78 in DeSoto County. To qualify for the award a roadway has to be at least 35 years old and be in its original state with the riding surface maintained through systematic overlays. The winning section of Highway 78 is in excellent condition and carries approximately 2.5 million equivalent single-axle loadings each year with 19 percent of that being truck traffic.



Mississippi Southern Transportation Institute participants

— The Exemplary Human Environment Initiatives Award from the FHWA was presented to the MDOT Environmental Division for its enhancement of public education efforts in highway project development throughout Mississippi. The staff developed an innovative and creative educational program for school-age children, which includes a student workbook, video wetland demonstrations, and aerial photography as visual aids. The program can be adapted for use by other transportation agencies. Two countries and 10 states have inquired about the environmental education program.

— The American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) presented MDOT with the 2008 Circle of Excellence PRIDE Award in the Public-Media Relations/Education category for the Mississippi Summer Transportation Institute (MSTI). Through MSTI, high school students are introduced to career opportunities in engineering and the transportation industry.

— ARTBA recognized MDOT with the 2008 Circle of Excellence PRIDE Award in the Community Relations Category for “Reconnecting the Gulf Coast: U.S. 90 Bridges Community Outreach”.

— The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) recognized MDOT and Parsons with the Honor Award, for the Biloxi Bay Bridge. A distinguished panel of judges with backgrounds in engineering, architecture, government, media, academia, and the military evaluated projects from all over the world for engineering excellence and selected the Biloxi Bay Bridge as one of 16 Honor Award winners.



Ribbon-tying ceremony for the Biloxi Bay Bridge

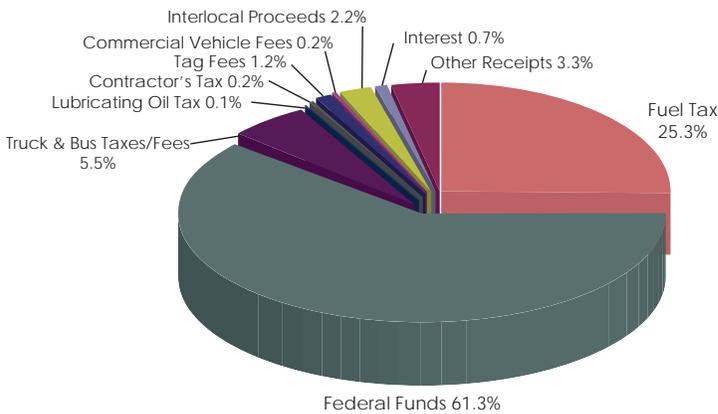
— MDOT was honored by the Tupelo Public School District with the Golden Apple Award. The rarely-bestowed award is designed to spotlight individuals, organizations, or businesses that have shown outstanding commitment to education. The award recognizes the innovative TRAC, RIDES, and CARS programs.

— Danada McMurtry, Outreach Division Director, was awarded the 2007 PIARC Prize for Communication by the World Road Association, based in Paris. The international organization was established in 1909 to exchange knowledge and ideas related to transportation. The PIARC Prize for Communication was created to encourage innovation and showcase professional expertise in communication for the global transportation industry. McMurtry’s winning entry, a handbook entitled, *Passing the Baton: Communication Techniques for Developing Tomorrow’s Workforce*, competed against the work of industry leaders throughout the United States as well as the World Road Association’s other 108 member countries. The prize included airfare and other travel expenses to Paris for the September 2007 World Road Congress, where Danada McMurtry received the award.

Financial Management and Budget

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2008

Cash Balance as of July 1, 2007 \$50,056,760



Receipts:

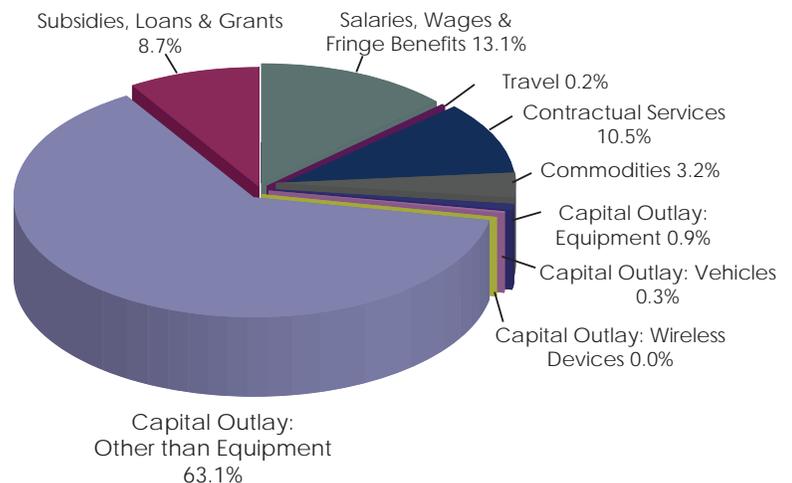
| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Federal Funds* | \$735,813,805 |
| Fuel Tax | 303,998,157 |
| Truck & Bus Taxes/Fees | 65,548,402 |
| Lubricating Oil Tax | 1,023,922 |
| Contractor's Tax | 1,912,472 |
| Tag Fees | 14,813,139 |
| Commercial Vehicle Fees | 1,848,029 |
| Interlocal Proceeds | 26,926,553 |
| Interest | 8,655,650 |
| Other Receipts | <u>39,673,240</u> |
| Total Receipts | \$1,200,213,369 |
| General Funds | \$200,000 |

Funds Available for Fiscal Year 2008 \$1,250,470,129

Disbursements:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits | \$153,412,936 |
| Travel | 2,900,746 |
| Contractual Services | 122,305,912 |
| Commodities | 37,131,268 |
| Capital Outlay: | |
| Equipment | 10,744,568 |
| Vehicles | 3,983,035 |
| Wireless Devices | 8,859 |
| Other than Equipment | 737,731,646 |
| Subsidies, Loans & Grants | <u>101,831,348</u> |
| Total Disbursements** | \$1,170,050,319 |

Cash Balance as of June 30, 2008 \$80,419,810



*Federal funds include \$252,246,408 of FHWA Hurricane Katrina Emergency Relief (ER) Funds.

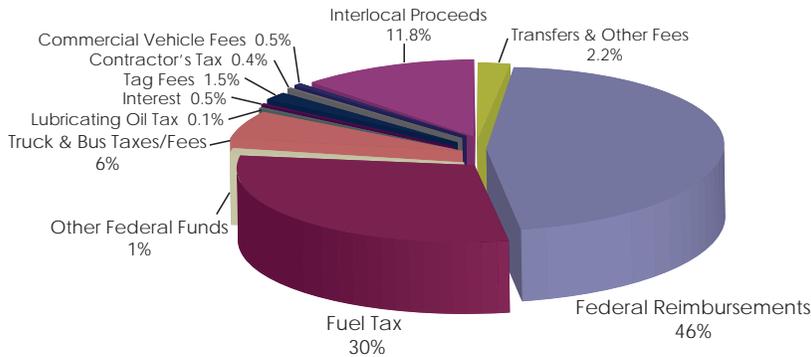
**FY 2008 Disbursements include \$226,724,027 in Hurricane Katrina-related expenditures.

Budgeted Revenues and Expenditures

for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2009

Cash Balance July 1, 2008

\$80,419,810



REVENUES:

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Federal Reimbursement | 460,000,000 |
| Fuel Tax | 300,000,000 |
| Other Federal Funds | 10,000,000 |
| Truck & Bus Taxes/Fees | 60,000,000 |
| Lubricating Oil Tax | 1,000,000 |
| Interest | 5,000,000 |
| Tag Fees | 15,000,000 |
| Contractor's Tax | 4,000,000 |
| Commercial Vehicle Fees | 5,000,000 |
| Interlocal Proceeds | 118,000,000 |
| Transfers & Other Fees | 22,000,000 |

BUDGETED REVENUES* \$1,000,000,000

TOTAL AVAILABLE \$1,080,419,810

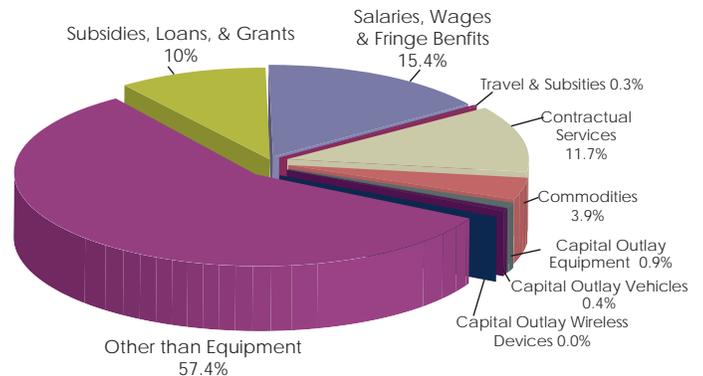
EXPENDITURES:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits | \$159,205,180 |
| Travel | 2,992,464 |
| Contractual Services | 120,878,328 |
| Commodities | 40,704,880 |
| Capital Outlay: | |
| Equipment | 9,399,790 |
| Vehicles | 4,062,010 |
| Wireless Devices | 38,200 |
| Other than Equipment | 594,833,288 |
| Subsidies, Loans & Grants | 103,077,760 |

BUDGETED EXPENDITURES* \$1,035,191,900

Estimated Cash Balance June 30, 2009 \$45,227,910

TOTAL ACCOUNTED FOR \$1,080,419,810



*Budgeted revenues and expenditures do not include \$113,000,000 of anticipated FHWA Hurricane Katrina Emergency Relief Funds. The addition of these funds brings the total to \$1.2 billion.

Revenue, Expenditures, and Finance

Revenue Sources

MDOT is funded through appropriations by the U.S. Congress and the Mississippi Legislature. Congress provides funding through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Federal Aviation Administration. For FY 2008, MDOT received \$735.8 million in federal funds.

State Revenue Sources

The Mississippi Legislature provides state funding through motor fuel taxes and other fees. Mississippi has a fuel tax of 18.4 cents per gallon. Under the Mississippi statutes, MDOT receives approximately 70 percent of total fuel taxes. MDOT received 73 percent of that amount in FY 2008: \$304 million. The statutes allocate millions of dollars to non-road construction entities such as Wildlife and Fisheries and Marine Resources. By statute, the remainder goes to cities and counties for road projects, the State Aid Road fund for county bridge replacements.

MDOT is also funded through receipts derived from other dedicated state taxes such as truck and bus fees, which include the truck and bus privilege tax, weight and size permits, and trip permits; a contractor's tax of 3.5 percent assessed on certain highway construction contracts; a \$5 per vehicle tag registration fee; a lubricating oil tax; and interest income.



Federal Revenue Sources

Federal highway construction assistance is paid to all states through the Federal-Aid Highway Program. Funding is derived from revenues collected by the U.S. Treasury from certain federal taxes on fuel, tire sales, and other items, which are deposited into the Federal Highway Trust Fund.

Distribution of assistance from the Highway Trust Fund is subject to periodic authorization and annual appropriation by Congress. Since such assistance was established by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, the program has been reauthorized many times in various forms at generally increasing funding levels. Actual payments to states have continued without interruption since 1956. Certain Federal-Aid Highway Program features are explained below:

- **The Federal Highway Trust Fund:** The Highway Trust Fund is a dedicated federal fund with revenues held in trust for reimbursement of expenditures by the states for costs of eligible transportation projects, including highway projects.
- **Authorization:** Authorization is the process by which Congress authorizes the expenditure of federal revenues on federal programs. For the Federal-Aid Highway Program, authorization historically has been, and continues to be, provided on a multi-year basis. This, together with the availability of Highway Trust Fund revenues and future Highway Trust Fund collections, provides states more certainty in planning long-term highway projects.



- Apportionment: For each federal fiscal year, the FHWA apportions the authorized funding among the states according to formulas that are established in authorizing statutes. The distribution of federal funds that do not have a statutory formula is called “allocation” rather than “apportionment.”
- Obligation Authority: “Obligation” is the commitment of the federal government to pay, through reimbursements to a state, its share of the eligible expenditures on an approved project. The amount of such federal revenues that a state can obligate in a given federal fiscal year is called its “Obligation Authority.”
- Role of Obligation Authority: The culmination of the federal authorization and appropriation process for the Federal-Aid Highway Program is the provision of Obligation Authority to a state. Obligation Authority, which is apportioned to states on an annual basis, sets the upper limit on the federal government’s commitment to pay, through reimbursements, its share of eligible expenditures on approved projects. Current year Obligation Authority plus prior years’ Obligation Authority obligated but not yet expended determines the maximum amount of federal highway assistance that a state may receive under the Federal-Aid Highway Program. Although annual Obligation Authority is not a direct representation of the amount of reimbursements a state will receive under the Federal-Aid Highway Program in a given year (e.g., due to lags in spending), Obligation Authority levels will determine over time the amount of reimbursements that a state may receive. Mississippi has received substantial funding through the Federal-Aid Highway Program.
- Use of Obligation Authority: Mississippi has consistently utilized its entire total Obligation Authority. MDOT reasonably expects to continue to utilize its entire total Obligation Authority.
- Future Utilization of Federal Highway Assistance: Under the Federal-Aid Highway Program, as projects are approved by the FHWA, the aggregate dollar amount of each state contract relating to that project is obligated against the remaining annual amount of Obligation Authority still available to that state. The state then pays the amounts owed under each contract as the work progresses and receives reimbursement from the federal government for the federal share of the total costs. The aggregate amount of reimbursements received by a state in any year is not necessarily equal to the state’s apportionment for that year. Many projects and contracts extend over several years. The aggregate amount made available to a state in any one year, if fully obligated, may be received as reimbursement over a longer period of time relating to the actual period of construction. MDOT expects that, as a result of its extensive statewide road and bridge program, it will have sufficient federally-eligible project expenditures to be able to utilize all program assistance that may be made available to Mississippi.

Revenue Received

MDOT's total revenue for FY 2008 was \$1.2 billion. State motor fuel taxes and federal funds provided 86.64 percent of the department's funding for FY 2008. MDOT received \$304 million in funds from state motor fuel taxes during this reporting period. As stated above, the state motor fuel tax is a primary funding source for the department. Revenue from other state taxes for FY 2008 included the following:

- Truck & Bus Taxes/Fees \$65.5 million
- Contractor's Tax \$1.9 million
- Railroad Mileage Tax \$0.2 million
- Tag Fees \$14.8 million

FHWA Emergency Relief Funds: Following Hurricane Katrina in August 2005, MDOT was appropriated \$1.013 billion in FHWA Emergency Relief funds to rebuild infrastructure along the Gulf Coast and remove debris from roadways throughout the state. Final approval of this Emergency Relief appropriation was received in January 2006. While awaiting final approval of the Emergency Relief fund appropriation, MDOT used \$105 million of regular obligation authority to fund Emergency Relief projects. In FY 2008, MDOT received \$252 million as reimbursements from the FHWA on Emergency Relief projects. We estimate that MDOT will receive \$113 million in reimbursements on Emergency Relief projects in FY 2009, which should conclude emergency funding relating to Hurricane Katrina.

Bonded Debt

State statutes provided authority for the issuance of \$200 million in bonds for the Four-Lane Highway Program and \$325 million in bonds for the Gaming Roads Program. The State Bond Commission has issued bonds for these programs as follows:

1987 Four-Lane Highway Program

- June 1999: \$200 million in 10-year revenue bonds Gaming Roads Program
- July 1998: \$125 million in 20-year general obligation bonds
- October 2000: \$100 million in one-year general obligation notes
- October 2002: The State Bond Commission issued \$200 million in general obligation bonds to retire the outstanding \$100 million in general obligation notes and to provide \$100 million for new Gaming Roads Program construction.

Under the H.E.L.P. statute, MDOT through the Mississippi Development Bank and local partners has issued:

- January 2005: \$45 million in special obligation bonds for the paving portion of SR 304 in Tunica County.
- October 2005: \$102 million for Harrison County State Route 601/Canal Road and \$32 million for the Laurel I-59 S-Curve.
- October 2006: \$145 million for the Madison County I-55 interchange, connectors, and frontage roads.
- October 2007: \$83 million for I-269 in Marshall and DeSoto counties.

Budgeted Expenditures

MDOT's budgetary expenditures for FY 2008 totaled \$1.170 billion. As shown below, the large majority of the department's expenditures were focused in the Construction Program (dollar amounts are in millions):

| | | |
|------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Maintenance Program | \$171.3 | 14.6% |
| Construction Program | \$880.3 | 75.2% |
| Administration Program | \$33.9 | 2.9% |
| Equipment & Buildings | \$19.4 | 1.7% |
| Debt Service Program | \$29.8 | 2.6% |
| Enforcement Program | \$13.5 | 1.1% |
| Aeronautics, Rails, and Transit Programs | \$21.8 | 1.9% |
| TOTALS | \$1,170 | 100% |

FY 2009 Projected Revenues & Expenditures

MDOT's budgeted expenditures (as appropriated by the Mississippi Legislature) for FY 2009 are \$1.035 billion, while estimated receipts are \$1.0 billion.



Major Projects FY 2008

District 1

- Appalachian Development Corridor ‘V’ from west of SR 23 to Alabama State Line – \$13.8M; let to W. S. Newell, Inc. in September 2007.
- SR 6 from SR 342 to Natchez Trace Parkway – \$11.7M; let to Hill Brothers Construction Co., Inc. in November 2007.
- MS 791 south of U.S. 82 (Golden Triangle Road) – complete and open to traffic.
- U.S. 78 from SR 15 to Blue Springs – upgraded to interstate standards as part of future I-22 construction.
- Frontage Road along U.S. 78 from CR 203 to SR 9 south at Sherman to accommodate for new Toyota plant – \$30.6M; let to Hill Brothers Construction Co., Inc. in November 2007.

District 2

- I-55 and U.S. 82 Montgomery County Interchange Lighting – complete.
- I-55 Carroll County Renovations to Vaiden Rest Area – complete.
- I-55 Tate and Desoto counties ROW Clearing and Fence Replacement – 90% complete.
- I-55 Desoto County Incident Management Project – Construction currently underway; includes the installation of a DMS sign and other ITS devices, as well as a connection to the TDOT Smartway ITS System; 10% complete.
- I-269 Desoto and Marshall counties – Project is in PE phase of ROW acquisition.

District 3

- U.S. 82 Bypass from Greenville Bridge to SR 1 – \$32.7M; let to Tanner Construction Co., Inc. in November 2007.
- U.S. 61 Signal Hill slide – complete and open to traffic.
- Mississippi approach to Greenville Bridge – complete.
- U.S. 61 Yazoo River Bridge – let in July 2006; 85% complete.

District 5

- I-55 from Pearl Street to I-220 – major overlay complete.
- STACK III and U.S. 49 RR Bridge – complete.
- U.S. 49 Pocahontas Rest Area – complete and open.
- I-59/20 Bridge Widening in Meridian – complete.
- I-220 Cable Barrier System – complete.
- I-55 from Byram to McDowell Road Cast-in-Place Barrier – complete.
- SR 19 from Collinsville to Newton County Line – \$26.9M; let to L & T Construction, Inc. in June 2008.

District 6

- Biloxi Bay Bridge – complete and all lanes open to traffic.
- Bay of St. Louis Bridge – complete and all lanes open to traffic.
- I-10 at NASA, Reconstruction of eastbound truck scales and construction of additional lane – \$13.1M; let to Malouf Construction, LLC in February 2008.
- SR 63/57 from U.S. 98 to Turkey Creek – \$37.6M; let to Tanner Construction Co., Inc. in March 2008.
- Laurel S-Curve – open to traffic but not complete.
- SR 67 from SR 605 to U.S. 49 – complete with four lanes open to traffic.

District 7

- U.S. 61 and U.S. 84/65 (Junkin Drive) in Natchez, Intersection Reconstruction – \$7.9M; let to W.E. Blain & Sons, Inc. in August 2007.
- U.S. 84 Collins Bypass – open to traffic.
- U.S. 84 Monticello Bypass – complete and open to traffic.



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For a report on automobile operating costs, maintenance & construction expenditures, and contracts awarded during fiscal year 2008, please visit MDOT's website at www.goMDOT.com/news/.

You may also request a printed copy by writing to: Outreach Division, Post Office Box 1850, Jackson, MS 39215

