



# WV DOT Today!

June 2024, Volume 6: Issue 6



## Run For The Wall Made A Pit Stop At The Capitol In Charleston!



## Paving Season Is In Full Force!



## Great Job District 10 On The West Virginia Welcome!





# \$150 Million In Supplemental Funding For Highways Signed By Governor

Gov. Jim Justice signed Senate Bill 1002 on Thursday, May 30, 2024, giving the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) \$150 million in supplemental highway funding for paving projects throughout the Mountain State.

Gov. Justice asked the Legislature to approve the extra funding during the first special legislative session in May. The money is in addition to \$190 million received by the WVDOH in federal highway funds.

"Signing this bill is a huge win for our roads, our people, and West Virginia," Gov. Justice said. "With federal funds only stretching so far, this additional \$150 million means our hardworking Division of Highways crew can roll up their sleeves and tackle even more roads. I am beyond proud we got this across the finish, and I thank the West Virginia Legislature for prioritizing our roads. Now, we can keep the momentum going and continue to improve every corner of our state."

The \$150 million supplemental budget appropriation will be used exclusively for paving projects in every district in West Virginia, and will greatly increase the ability of the WVDOH to pave the roads West Virginians drive every day.

"Once again, our Governor has led from the front," said Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E. "He has demonstrated time and again that investing in our infrastructure pays dividends for our citizens. By calling the Legislature back for a special session to appropriate surplus funds for highway paving, our great people will continue to reap the rewards of a highway system that serves them well."

When Gov. Justice took office in 2017, he made highway maintenance and construction a major cornerstone of his administration. Gov. Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity program and Secondary Roads Initiative combined to address decades of underinvestment in the Mountain State's highway and bridge infrastructure and transform the state's highway system. In that same time, over \$816 million of surplus funds has been delivered to WVDOH to repair and improve West Virginia's roadways.

Knowing that federal highway funding can only go so far and pave so many miles of road, Gov. Justice has asked the Legislature to approve additional money for the WVDOH for paving and other uses for the past several years.

The WVDOH has used a portion of those supplemental budget appropriations for new equipment, but this year, it plans to use the funding solely for additional paving projects throughout the state. In all, the supplemental budget appropriation will pay for 499 paving projects on more than 973 miles of road that aren't covered by federal highway funds.



## WVDOT Today!

is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Public Relations Division. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOH employees to empower us to function as **one west Virginia Department of Transportation.**

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# WVDOH Rolls Out \$191 Million In Federally Funded Paving Projects

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) has more than \$191 million in federally funded paving projects scheduled for fiscal year 2024. The total includes \$76.7 million for projects on state interstates, \$40 million for projects on US highways, and \$74,387,500 for other state and US routes.

Interstate projects include an estimated \$22 million project to rebuild Interstate 77 from Tappers Creek Road to the Jackson County line, an estimated \$16 million project to rebuild Interstate 79 from Servia to Frametown, and an estimated \$15 million project to rebuild I-77 from Fairplain to Ripley.

Other interstate projects include an estimated \$2.2 million to resurface Interstate 64 from Clintonville to Lewisburg, \$8 million for a pavement overlay on I-79 from Amma to Wallback, \$6 million to resurface I-79 between Big Chimney and Frame Road, and \$7.5 million for concrete slab repairs on I-64 between Dawson and Sam Black Church.

Projects on US highways include slab repairs on US 119 in Boone County, pavement overlays on US 119 in Mingo County from US 52 to WV 65, resurfacing on US 50 from Ellenboro to Bunnel Run Road in Ritchie County and from Cabin Run Road to Right Fork Run Road in Doddridge County, microsurfacing US 119 from Little Coal River Road to Ruthdale Road in Kanawha County, repaving US 19 from Youngs Monument to Birch River Road in Nicholas County, and microsurfacing US 460 from Goodwin Chapel to the Virginia state line in Mercer County. The projects come to \$40 million.

The budget also includes more than \$74.3 million for 62 paving projects on other state and US routes.

The WVDOH has historically gotten the vast majority of its funding for paving, road maintenance and construction from the federal government.

For the past several years, Gov. Jim Justice has asked the West Virginia Legislature to approve supplemental budget appropriations to allow the WVDOH to undertake additional paving. In addition to Gov. Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity construction and maintenance program, the supplemental budget appropriations have allowed the WVDOH to build and repave record numbers of roads.





# WVDOH Presented With 2024 Grand Award From American Council of Engineering Companies

West Virginia Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., and Deputy Secretary Alanna Keller, P.E., recently attended an American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) awards ceremony in Washington D.C. to accept the 2024 Grand Award for the Wellsburg Bridge project in Brooke County.

The ceremony took place on Wednesday, May 15, 2024, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in downtown Washington D.C., recognizing the year's most outstanding overall engineering achievements.

"This project is truly a modern engineering achievement," said Wriston. "The innovation of our consulting and contracting partners allowed us to finally complete this project after over 70 years in the making."

In April, Wriston and Keller attended the ACEC 2024 Engineering Excellence Awards Gala in New York City to accept a Diamond Award for the Wellsburg Bridge project. Competing with multi-billion dollar projects, West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) was only one of eight Diamond Award winners nationwide to be recognized with a Grand Award in Washington D.C.

The crystal 2024 Grand Award reads, "presented to West Virginia Division of Highways: In Demonstrating Exemplary Engineering Excellence for Wellsburg Arch Bridge. Achieved by COWI."

WVDOH shared both awards with COWI consultants, design consultant on the innovative bridge project. COWI and construction contractors Flatiron Construction made a bold decision to build the 830-foot main span of the bridge on the shore of the Ohio River and float the completed span downriver on barges to be lifted into place on its piers. It was the largest bridge lift ever attempted in North America.

"Once again, the big bold vision of our Governor, to put transportation infrastructure at the center of our great state's growth, is exemplified and recognized on a national scale," said Wriston.

On Wednesday, September 21, 2023, Gov. Jim Justice cut the ribbon to officially open the bridge to the sound of marching bands, clouds of confetti and fireworks. An estimated 2,500 people turned out to celebrate the opening of the bridge, which connects Wellsburg, West Virginia with Brilliant, Ohio.





# WVDOH Passes Major Milestone On I-64 Widening Project

The West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) passed a major milestone on Thursday, May 23, 2024, after one lane of traffic opened on the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge on Interstate 64.

The new bridge, one of two new spans over the Kanawha River between the Nitro and St. Albans exits of I-64, is part of an approximately \$225 million project to widen I-64 to six lanes between Nitro and the US 35 exit. It is one of the largest construction projects undertaken under Gov. Jim Justice's \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity construction and maintenance program.

The project will greatly reduce congestion at a major bottleneck on one of the most heavily traveled sections of highway in the Mountain State. The original two-lane Donald Legg Bridge carried an average of 60,000 vehicles a day.

"It's exciting to see projects like this near completion so that people can see how the governor's and the WVDOH's vision for what the state's transportation network can be when we have the proper funding," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Chief Engineer of Operations.

In November 2019, Gov. Justice announced a contract for more than \$224 million to Brayman-Trumble, A Joint Venture, to build a new westbound bridge on I-64, tear down the old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge and replace it with a new structure, and widen I-64 to six lanes between the Nitro and US 35 exits. The contract also included replacing I-64 bridges that cross Conrail railroad tracks, Rocky Step Road, McCloud Road and Bills Creek Road, plus revamping the St. Albans interchange and the ramps connecting the interchange to WV 817.

The original Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge opened to traffic in 1962. It was named for Cpl. Donald Milton Legg, a steelworker who lost his life when he fell from the bridge during construction.

In October 2022, Gov. Justice announced the opening of the westbound World War I Memorial Bridge just north of the old Donald M. Legg Bridge. Eastbound and westbound traffic was shifted onto the new bridge to allow demolition of the old span.

The main span of the old Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge was gently lowered onto a barge in December 2022 as contractors began disassembling the old structure. The bridge had served the public for 60 years.

On Wednesday, September 6, 2023, Brayman-Trumble lifted the 314-foot main span of the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge into position, completing the bridge superstructure from one side of the Kanawha River to the other.

With the concrete bridge deck poured and paving underway, the new Donald M. Legg Memorial Bridge is expected to open all lanes to traffic soon.

Widening work between the Nitro and US 35 exits is also nearly complete. Work that remains to be finished includes construction of a new I-64 bridge over WV 25, construction of approximately 6,000 feet of barrier wall between the Nitro and St. Albans exits, striping, and installation of interstate lighting and signage.

The entire project is expected to be complete this fall.





# Let There Be Light! WVDOH Looking To Drones For Construction Zones

West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) engineers are looking into the use of tethered drones to provide nighttime lighting for construction and work zones.

"It's being done in other places in the country," said Todd Rumbaugh, P.E., WVDOH Chief Engineer of Construction. "I think it could be very useful."

Virginia-based PegaPod LLC is currently marketing several models of drones equipped with high-powered LED lighting to provide overhead lighting useful for nighttime work or other activities like sporting events. According to the company, drones hovering high in the air can provide better lighting with less shadows than traditional pole lighting or construction work lights, while providing four to five times the coverage area for conventional lights of similar wattage.

After reviewing the technology, Rumbaugh believes drone-provided light could be a viable option for lighting WVDOH work zones at night.

"Light plants are down low and they blind drivers," Rumbaugh said. "These will be 100 feet in the air."

Drone systems are currently available providing 100,000 lumens of light, 250,000 lumens, and 500,000 lumens. The systems are intended to be tethered to the ground and connected to an earthbound power source for long flight times.

But the systems aren't exactly cheap. Costs start at about \$40,000.

Still, Rumbaugh believes drones could be a safer alternative to conventional work lights for both workers and the traveling public.

"There are so many possibilities," Rumbaugh said. "I can see this being the future."





# WVDOH Invests In 110 New Tractor Mowers

With the help of Gov. Jim Justice and the West Virginia Legislature, the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) just bought 110 new John Deere tractor mowers to use in each of the state's 10 highway districts.

Transportation Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., intends the new machines be used on the Mountain State's secondary roads. The tractor mowers, with a unit cost of about \$122,000, are paid for through a supplemental budget allocation requested by Gov. Justice and approved by the Legislature.

"We do a very good job mowing our expressways," said Joe Pack, P.E., WVDOH Chief of Operations. "We expect the same on our secondary roads.

"The Secretary is not shy to address a problem with sufficient resources," Pack said.

The new mowers are supplementing existing machines and replacing machines that had lived out their lives or were requiring too much down time and expense to keep in running order. In some cases, WVDOH maintenance crews were cannibalizing parts from old machines to maintain tractors for which parts are no longer available.

The WVDOH schedules interstates and expressways to be mowed at least three times a year. Secondary roads are to be mowed at least twice a year. The goal is to have even small, rural, low-traffic roads mowed at least once each year.

"The fix to getting this done is to buy the proper equipment to do the job," Pack said.

The tractor mowers are coming to the WVDOH Equipment Division in Buckhannon a few machines at a time, and are being sent out to the 10 highway districts almost immediately.

There are currently 67 of the new mowers out in the field and in operation. More are on the way.





# Work On Interstate 79 Widening And Bridge Projects Nearing Completion

Work is nearing completion on a massive widening project on Interstate 79 from Harrison County to the Pennsylvania state line that includes the demolition and reconstruction of several sets of interstate bridges.

I-79 is being widened to three lanes in either direction from South Fairmont north. Widening is expected to be complete on southbound I-79 later this summer, with widening work on northbound I-79 expected to be complete by summer of 2025.

Work is underway to replace several sets of interstate bridges along the route. In March 2023, the southbound portion of the South Fairmont West Virginia Arch Bridge was demolished as part of a bridge replacement project. Demolition of the northbound span followed in December.

Construction of new bridges at Middletown is now complete, and the new Kingmont Overpass Bridge is expected to be open to traffic within the next few weeks.

Bridges at Millersville and Tygart River must still be replaced. Demolition of the existing northbound Tygart River Bridge has been complete, and contractors are setting steel beams for the final phase of bridge construction.

Meanwhile several other highway projects are scheduled to begin within the next 60 days in West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDH) District 4, which includes Doddridge, Harrison, Marion, Monongalia, Preston, and Taylor counties.

In the pipeline are a \$1.6 million project to replace the Everetteville Bridge in Monongalia County, a \$1.43 million project to resurface the Interstate 68 Exit ramps, \$1.4 million to repave WV 26 from Valley Point to Wollen Mills in Preston County, and \$1.6 million to repave the intersection of US 50 and WV 18 in Doddridge County.

A project to upgrade ADA ramps in Bruceton Mills in Preston County is also expected to get underway within the next two months. The WVDH is upgrading ADA ramps all over the state to comply with federal mandates.







# Cenforce Crews Complete Repairs To Bridge On Interstate 64

West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) Cenforce crews recently completed a major repair project in Kanawha County.

This month, crews completed repairs to the Montrose Drive Exit Bridge on Interstate 64 in Charleston that was damaged on February 19, 2024, by an excavator being hauled by a tractor-trailer.

Repairs included adding a new 38-foot steel beam along with two, seven-foot long support beams to the I-64 eastbound side of the bridge to provide extra stability to the existing damaged beam. This work was completed during the overnight hours beginning on Sunday, May 12, 2024, and concluded during the early morning hours of Thursday, May 16, 2024. Overnight work was preferred in order to minimize the impact of traffic delays during day on the heavily traveled I-64.

Specific lanes were closed each night to install the seven-foot beams. A total road closure happened on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, to allow Cenforce to install the thirty eight-foot beam.

Although this work was initiated by the District 1 Bridge Office, it took many groups working together to make the project possible. Special recognition goes out to the District 1 Equipment Shop and Bridge Department, Robert Blaylock, District 1 Interstate Crew Equipment Division (Rusty Farrar), West Virginia State Police, and South Charleston Police.



## Rob Pennington Receives Roads Scholars II Certificate.

Congradulation to Rob Pennington for recieving his Roads Scholars II certificate!

Rob would like to encourage all his employees to follow in his footsteps and get theirs.



## VISION AWARDS

*Congratulations to the following individuals being recognized this month by Secretary Wiston for their dedication to The Vision.*

- Jonathan Schaffer - Secretary's Office*
- Rehacen McDonnell - Deputy General Counsel*
- Kathryn Hill - Human Resource*
- Jill Dunn - Legal Division Director*
- Matt Ball - Human Resources*
- Brian Cooper - District 7*
- Randy Harris - District 4*
- Lori Suite - Transportation Executive Administrator*
- Rita Pauley - Assistant Commissioner Highways*
- Ray Patrick - Assistant Division Director*
- Cindy Butler - Division of Multimodal Transportation*
- Travis Long - Technical Support Division*
- Doug Kirk - Chief Engineer of Esviranmental Compliance*
- Lorrie Hodges - Executive Assistant*

*The Vision is simple; to be the best DOT in the country, for the purpose of giving our West Virginia the chance it should have - a place of prosperity and joy, where citizens have the best chance to build the lives they hope for. To be the best DOT in the country based on the quality of our work and motivation. To be the safest place for our employees to work. To be the best trained, and most educated. To go Above and Beyond, every day.*





# Personnel Changes In The Division of Highways

Several personnel changes inside The Division of Highways have taken place last week. The following lists all the people who have made the changes and their new titles:

Stephen R. "Randy" Harris, P.E. - Interim District 4 Manager

Michael C. Daley - District 3 District Manager

Charles S. Swart, P.E. - Interim Director of Engineering for District 6

Joseph M. Pack, P.E. - Interim District 1 District Engineer while retaining his normal duties.

Raymond "Scott" Eplin - Assistant Deputy Secretary of Transportation



# Students and Staff Remember Ranger Elementary School

Students and staff from Ranger Elementary School recently emblazoned the Ranger Bridge with their names and handprints as a memorial to the school, which closed at the end of the school year.

"It's really been a good experience for the community," said Donna Martin, spokeswoman for the Ranger Improvement Committee. "It shows our support for our school, which has been there for 104 years."

Martin and others got permission from the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) to paint the bridge.

"We're very appreciative of the cooperation of the DOT," Martin said. Local WVDOT crews even went so far as to pressure wash the bridge prior to painting so the paint would stick better.

Consolidation closed the doors at Ranger Elementary at the end of the school year. Beginning in August, students will either go to Harts PK-8 or West Hamlin PK-5.



# New Guests Each Week!



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