

WV DOT Today!

Marvin Murphy: The Key to 50 Years is "Listen"

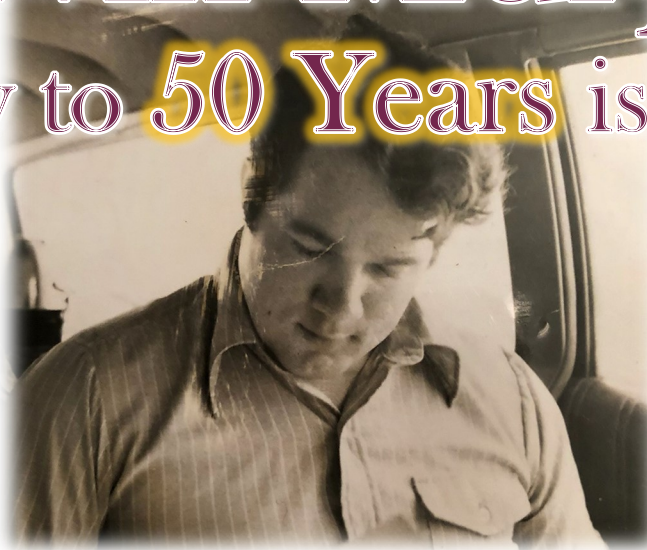
Assistant Deputy Secretary Marvin Murphy recently passed a significant milestone in both his marriage and his career. The humble engineer from Calhoun County celebrated his 50th wedding anniversary, and a few days later, his 50th work anniversary with the West Virginia Division of Highways.

"Probably everyone in this entire organization of 5,000 people knows who Marvin Murphy is," said Deputy Secretary of Transportation Jimmy Wriston. "He's an institution. He is exactly the type of professional that we all strive to be."

Murphy, 72, grew up on Leading Creek Road in Calhoun County, one of seven children. He holds a degree in civil engineering from West Virginia Tech. He went to work for WVDOH fulltime as a bridge engineer in District 3 in 1971, as a newly-wed and straight out of college. Murphy went on to be a Maintenance Engineer, District Engineer and State Highway Engineer before his current position, but it isn't what he did that stands out the most to people; it's how he did it. With kindness and integrity in every step; many people have met Marvin but few have ever forgotten him.

"As you know, my father is a humble individual and does not boast on his own accomplishments," said his son, Mackenzie, who is also employed by WVDOH. "But that does not stop us, his family, from being very proud of him."

When asked why he has stayed around, Murphy replies with a laugh, "If there's ever a point where I cannot still make a difference, I would go home," he said. "Right now is not that time."



Jeff Pifer, director of the WVDOH Equipment Division, has an office across from Murphy in Buckhannon. Pifer said Murphy knows something about every employee he comes across. But one of his biggest assets is a genuine desire to help those in need.

Once, Murphy found out about 17 families on a rural road who were shut in every time it rained. Helping those people is one of Murphy's fondest memories.

"These were people who were just good old farm people and lived out in the country," Murphy recalled. But he made sure their road got fixed so they could get out in bad weather. Pifer said Murphy seems to have a particular soft spot for the underdog.

On a recent WV on the DOT podcast, when asked what advice he would give for employees hoping for a 50 year career as successful as his, Murphy replied that it's the same as with his 50 year marriage; "Listen. Try to see where the other person is coming from."

**Page 5: Beware
The Automatic Nose**



Management Says Thank You

As the season turns from a successful spring pothole milling and filling season to a hot summer full of new pavement, West Virginia Division of Highway's upper management took a moment to send out a thank you to the folks across the state who made it happen.

"I'm impressed with the quality of pothole patches I'm seeing, everywhere I go," said State Highway

Engineer, Alan Reed, P.E. "The milling and filling is square and smooth. You can't tell the difference when you cross a county line. I'm out there on beautiful roads all over the state, and I know what it takes — it's not easy. Our people are taking pride in their work and doing it the right way." "I've been impressed by the quality of the people I've met at the Department of Transportation," said Secretary Byrd White. "At all levels, and all types of work. I don't think the public realizes how many different things we're responsible for, and over and over, I'm

impressed by the work but also the people I've met."

The focus was not simply on doing the work, but on doing it consistently across the state. The way District 1 Manager Arlie

Matney describes the process, it's like a coffee cup. You can ask yourself if the cup is half empty or half full, but either way, the cup is still there. A pothole, whether empty or full, is still there until you



mill it out. Remove the problem, then start fresh.

"It's been a tough year," said Deputy Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E.. "I didn't ask our men and women to do something easy that had been done before. This was tough. Our people were willing to keep at it and keep going, even with the pandemic, and keep gaining ground not just sitting still. We used to be an easy target for criticism, and we're not anymore. We're gaining ground and we're not letting up."

• **WVDOT Today!** is a monthly newsletter published by the West Virginia Department of Transportation. The purpose of this publication is to facilitate connection across the diverse worksites and professions represented among WVDOT employees to empower us to function as one West Virginia Department of Transportation.

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J.B. Heflin: District 4's Employee of the Year

By District 4 Management

James "JB" Heflin began his career with the Division of Highways on January 2, 2002 as a Transportation Worker (TW) 2 Equipment Operator in Doddridge County and is currently a TW4 Crew Chief for District 4 paving crew.

Throughout JB's career with Highways he has worn many hats as he climbed the ranks. Though his title has changed from time to time the one thing that never changes is his willingness to help out his co-workers. It doesn't matter what his title is, JB is always willing to jump in and take on any challenge and always with a smile on his face.

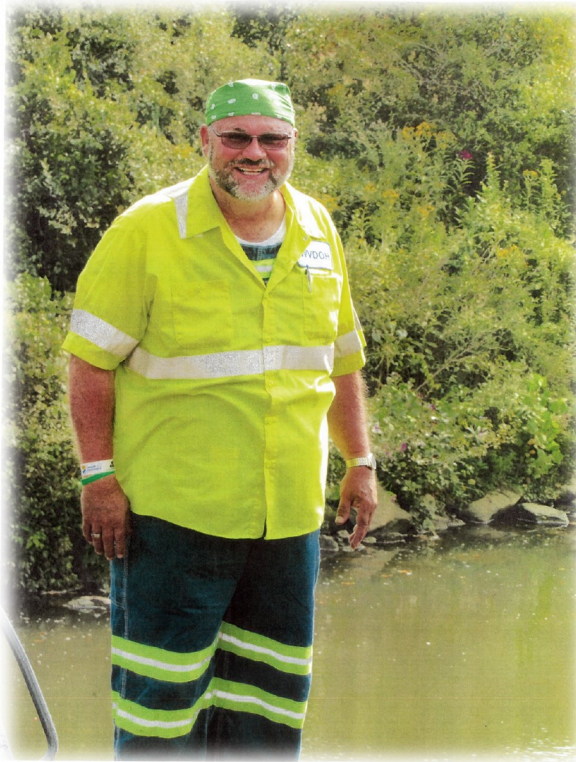
If you mention JB's name to any of his coworkers the first thing they do is smile.

JB has earned the respect and admiration of his coworkers by being a team player, always willing to go above and beyond to help others, leading by example, but even more importantly by working through adversity. JB has been fighting a valiant battle

against cancer and the treatments and side effects that go along with this life altering diagnosis. JB's dedication to his job is great. He would leave work to get a treatment and then return and finish his shift. Through everything JB has managed to continue to work and be an asset to District 4 and an example of how we all should approach every trial in our own lives. There are no words that can explain what JB Heflin means to his friends in District 4.

So in recognition of his outstanding performance, superior dedication and positive attitude, both on the job and in his personal life, we would love to honor JB by naming him the employee of the year in District 4.

Editor's Note: Kind words travel as far as negative ones, and don't let anyone tell you any differently. Kind words about JB traveled all the way to Governor Justice, and at the groundbreaking ceremony for Tygart State Park's adventure course. (District 4 crews went above and beyond to expediently pave the road.) Deputy Secretary Jimmy Wriston was proud to present JB's certificate and a few more, kind words to reflect on JB's dedication to his work.



Roger Bradford: Thanks for Sharing!

Roger Bradford shot this excellent photo of District 5 road crews paving in Mineral County.

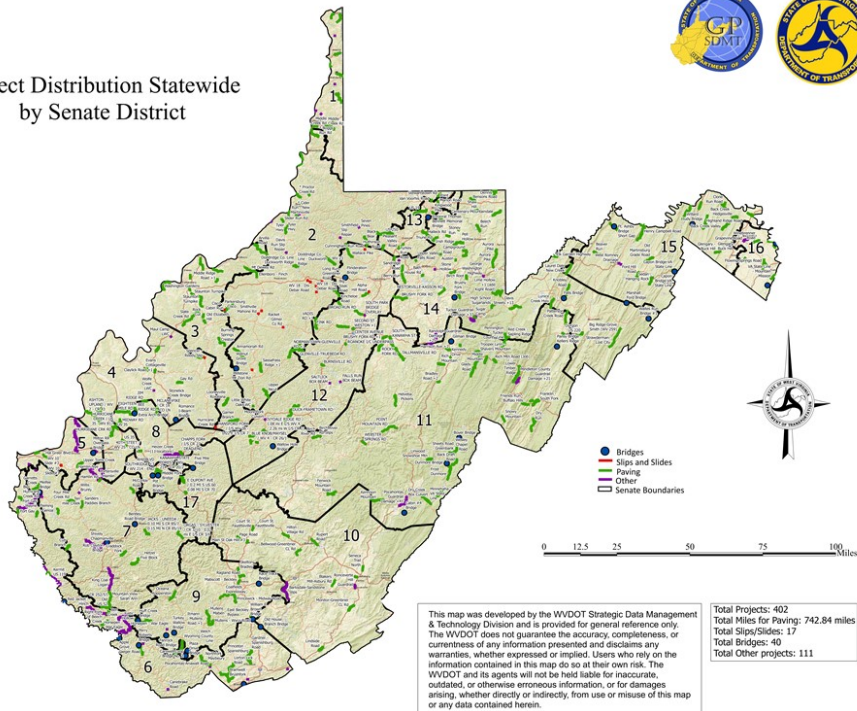
When we share photos like this on our social media or feature them with press releases we send out to the public, we're not only showing how amazing that stretch of road looks. We're also showing our fellow West Virginians the skill, dedication and care we put into each mile of road we maintain. In the photo, you can see four people. Each one is carefully watching to see that his role in the process is done correctly. You can look at any of the people in the photo and see that that individual is a West Virginian who is proud of the work they are doing.

All over the state, workers on the ground are helping document the excellence of their co-workers. Photos are a different language than words, and they say different things. You could stand around all day saying, "Our men and women care about their work" but —when you see the person with the shovel in his hands, or the boots on the ground, or the suntan indicating it's not the only day they've worked in the hot sun; you see the diligence first hand. To everyone who helps share our story in photographs; keep up the great work!



Legislature Approves \$150 Million in Funding

Project Distribution Statewide
by Senate District



Projects included on the list include paving part of US 19 in Monongalia County, drainage corrections at 11 different locations on Heizer Creek in Kanawha County, repaving Hall Greer Boulevard in Huntington and bridge deck repair on the John Nash Boulevard Bridge in Bluefield.

Projects range from a few thousand dollars to projects running more than \$1 million. They include paving projects, bridge projects and slide and drainage repair projects in all parts of West Virginia.

“Some of these are US routes that are important in local areas,” said DOH Chief Engineer of Operations Greg Bailey. “Some are small local roads, rural bridges or slips and slides.”

CHARLESTON, WV – On Monday, June 7, 2021, the West Virginia Legislature met in special session to approve \$150 million in new funding to address issues on another round of secondary roads in West Virginia.

Requested by Gov. Jim Justice, the West Virginia House and Senate approved taking the money from the state’s budget surplus and distributing it to WVDOH highway districts all over the Mountain State for much-needed repair and maintenance on roads and bridges.

“There are over 400 of these projects planned,” said Deputy Commissioner Jimmy Wriston. “These projects are on the roads where our people live. These are on the roads where it touches their lives every day.”

Combined funding through federal sources, and money from Justice’s ambitious \$2.8 billion Roads to Prosperity highway construction and rehabilitation program has freed up money to allow DOH to concentrate on secondary roads and core maintenance issues like ditching, patching and canopy clearing to put West Virginia’s roads into the best shape they’ve been in for a long time. Each new funding source has allowed DOH to get more work done.

Bailey said the latest round of funding approved by the Legislature will allow DOH to do even more.

“Because of the budget surplus, the governor and the Legislature decided it was one of their priorities to do as much as they could for the roads and highways of West Virginia,” Bailey said.



When you’re out and about this summer, remember that our motorcycle friends are out and about too. Share the road! Keep them safe.



BEWARE

The Automatic Nose

West Virginia Department of Transportation is in the middle of a good, solid plan. Governor Justice's Roads to Prosperity program is rolling now, on highways around the state; with projects of all sizes moving forward at a breathtaking speed. There is roadwork in all 55 counties, and every time we gear up and become more efficient, more projects open up and it's time to find even more efficiency.

The whole entire point of it all is that West Virginian's have a tendency to fight for the underdog and we finally understand that it's about time the underdog we fought for is our home state. It's our turn! With all the state agencies pulling the rope in the

same direction like never before, we're plunged into an effort that is bringing about changes we are starting to feel. Through combined, sustained, and focused effort, we're showing how we can be more and more.

But lurking under the momentum in some corners of our organization is that old Automatic Nose.

Can we do it? Can we fix all the roads? Can we bring real prosperity to our state? Can we take what we have and do what we can with it? When the questions are posed, we have a choice. We've got Automatic No's and we've got Automatic Yes's. Beware those Automatic No's.

Automatic Yes doesn't negate that the teamwork required will be monumental; that this many people have not worked on a project this intricate before. Automatic Yes is a path to the

outcome we definitely want, but instead of just noting it's a long road ahead, and then hoping someone else comes along to take care of it Automatic Yes pulls out a map and starts plotting steps. Automatic Yes gets it that we're here anyway, whether we put in an honest effort or whether we fake it and try to tread water until nobody's looking again. Automatic Yes shapes us; it's good for the organization, it's good for West Virginia, but it's good for us as individuals too.



It's easy to go back to the old Automatic No's. Every path we could choose has pitfalls and challenges; we can work through them or stop before we start and just say "*We can't because **thing**. We can't because **other thing**.*" It's easy, but it's not very pleasant.

Automatic Yes is the sunny evening drive on a smooth road at the end of a long day of working, winning and covering ground. In our service to West Virginia, West Virginia deserves for us to be Automatic Yes people. Lean first toward the possibilities, which are as endless as our will to make it so, and... **beware the Automatic No's.**

(Need a laminated copy for your bulletin board? Contact: Jennifer.J.Dooley@wv.gov)



Equal Employment Opportunity Includes You!

By: H. Julian Woods, J.D.

You should be aware that The Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was created to protect YOU from discrimination and harassment.

As a seasoned Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) trainer/professional, I have heard many statements such as, “We have to go to this training to learn how to treat the girls.” Or I would hear, “We have to go to this training because someone got offended by a harmless joke.” On occasion, I was even asked, “Why is this necessary? It’s a waste of time!” Sometimes I would hear, “It’s that program.”

Equal protection laws help workers access and succeed in their professions by ensuring all employees are treated equally in all aspects of their jobs. For example, would you think it is a good idea to discriminate against someone based on their status as a parent, their marital status, their veteran or military status, or even one’s political affiliation? How about discriminating against someone based on a pregnancy? Or maybe because someone has a medical condition? These and other discriminatory or harassing acts do happen and EEO laws were created to address such occurrences. New laws are continually created to help protect employees in areas you would not think.

The list of protected categories continues to expand every year and includes race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity, national origin), age (40 and older), disability and genetic information (including family medical history).

The good news is, although some insensitive statements continue to be made today, the world is far more knowledgeable and accepting of personal differences.

At some point in your career, you may believe that you have been the victim of employment-related discrimination. In most cases, your first response should be an informal one — bring the problem to the attention of the person you believe discriminated against you or to that person’s supervisor. What happened may have been an innocent mistake on his or her part, or you may have misconstrued the situation. Give everyone the benefit of the doubt and an opportunity to clear the air or rectify the situation. If the problem remains, you can continue to try to resolve it informally by “working your way up the ladder.”

Should a situation require further attention, please contact your HR representative or the Office of Civil Rights - EEO Unit at 304-414-6884 .

Meet Dawna Cork



Business Manager, Carla Rotsch, takes this opportunity to welcome her new Deputy, Dawna Cork.

A CPA with bachelor’s degrees in accounting and mathematics, Cork grew up in Fayetteville and graduated from West Virginia Tech in

Montgomery. Her husband, Ron Cork, is an engineer in District 4. She has 24 years of experience in state government.

She most recently worked in the State Auditor’s office. But when the new position of Deputy Business Manager came open, she jumped at it.

“This job was such a wonderful opportunity, I couldn’t pass it up,” she said.

When not working Cork likes fishing and other outdoor activities.

June Training and Development

“Due to the various network issues, we are implementing a temporary registration process for June courses,” said Administrative Services Manager Charlene Chandler. “In the interim, we are asking anyone interested in attending a class to email DOHTrainingDevelopment@wv.gov with the class selection in the subject line. Also, include your A or E # along with your supervisor’s name. We will enroll you in the class and send you a confirmation email with the link to attend the class on the scheduled date. “

Upcoming June courses include a class on Communication and Active Listening on June 3, Technical Tip Tuesday—Word on June 8, Business Writing that Works on June 9, Technical Tip Tuesday—PowerPoint on June 15, Dr. Who?-Keirsev Temperament (exploration of the four temperaments that make people “tick”) on June 16 and Microsoft Word: Basics on June 17.

For more information, contact, Monica.S.Ashford@wv.gov or DOHTrainingDevelopment@wv.org



WVDOH—Employees of the Year

Secretary, Deputy Secretary and State Highway Engineer

Todd Schoonover

Arlie Matney

Lorrie Hodges

Divisions

Auditing—Corey Wade

Budget—Diane Jordan

Civil Rights—David Ballard

Contract Administration—Hao Chen

Engineering—Sydney Burke

Equipment—Michele Wright

Finance—Susan Creager

Legal—Julia Vande Linde

Materials—Stefanie Elliott

Office Services—Kelli Clagg

Operations—Marty Gibson

Personnel—

Kandy McKinney

Planning—

Christopher Kinsey

Programming—

Joe Weiskircher

Public Relations—

Randy Damron

Reporting—Michelle Oxley

Right of Way—Jeanie Casto

Strategic Management—Jeremy Casto

Technical Support—Katie Roberts

Traffic—Monty Khan

Districts

D-1—Kathy Rushworth

D-2—Linda Hatfield-Corder

D-3—Jason Nichols

D-4—James Heflin

D-5—Chris Corbin

D-6—Mike Witherow

D-7—Warren Todd Hall

D-8—Jeremiah Knavenshue

D-9—Tim Coffman

D-10—Joey Smith



Do You Need an App for That?

By Jeremy Casto

The Strategic Data Management and Technology Division is on a mission. A mission to bring all our agency's data into one location. It's the way the world works nowadays. Data-driven decisions make operations more efficient, eliminate waste, provide the ability to research and know what is working well and what is not, and help us to align with our goals, objectives, and initiatives.

Our current problem is individual data silos maintained by employees, sections, divisions and districts that make getting information slow and inaccurate.

As an example, tools such as Microsoft Access and Excel are at the root of this problem.

Employees enter their specific data into an Excel spreadsheet or Access database that is stored on their computer, therefore creating an individual silo. When upper management requests that specific information from across the state in order to make a decision, there is a scramble to get the information updated and emailed to a central point of contact.

Then the point of contact has to compile all of the data and figure out what is right or not right with it to make the best decision that they can for the task. This way of doing business is antiquated, slow and, 99.99% of the time, includes bad and inaccurate data. Bad data going in = bad data coming out.

Period.

Our division has been tasked with "fixing it." We are currently in the process of developing an agency Data Solution, or the term most people understand it as, "Data Warehouse." This is a

challenging project for a state government agency with multiple levels of approval, 5,000 + employees and locations all across the state.

One major piece of the project as we move towards a data solution is developing user-friendly, real-time applications from the many Excel and Access databases that currently reside on employees' personal computers.

To accomplish this, a dream team of Database Administrators (DBA) and Programmer Analysts had to be assembled.

Our division has put together a bright, forward-thinking, data-driven team that has already begun helping users kick out applications that are appealing to the eye, easy to use and give upper management real-time reporting.

While we have a vision to tear down the silos and bring all data into one location, we need users to be open to change to help us accomplish this. Holding on to your individual, outdated Excel and Access databases does not make decision making any better at a higher level. We are here to help your divisions, districts and agencies create an easy-to-use application that can help you and the agency become more efficient and make better data-driven decisions.

Do you have an idea for a new application that would improve your current process? Give us a shout! We can set up a quick consultation to evaluate your current process and create a solution.

Visit our site for more information:
<https://dotapps.transportation.wv.gov/>

Big Problems Require Big Solutions

What do you do when you have a BIG drainage problem? You dig a BIG hole to fix it.

Work crews in District 4 recently had to correct a major drainage problem that was creating a slide about six miles south of Morgantown on US 119. Water had been seeping in behind an old slip repair, causing slipping to continue.

District 4 work crews dug out the roadside to a depth of about 30 feet in order to install a new French drain, which included putting in a fabric barrier to keep the new drain from silting up.

Work was expected to take about two weeks, to fix a problem that had existed for several years.





Not every state Department of Transportation has a podcast, but yours does. WV on the DOT shares real voices and real stories from your co-workers and our fellow state agencies. You can listen on the website at transportation.wv.gov by clicking on Podcast; or follow it on the Soundcloud App. New shows upload every Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

VISION AWARDS

Congratulations to the following individuals recognized this month by Secretary Byrd White and Deputy Secretary Jimmy Wriston, P.E., for their dedication to The Vision.

Joshua Ramsey—District 1

Steve Boggs — Technical Support

Greg Hott — District 5

Mahmoud Karimpour — District 2

Mohammed Khan — Traffic

Elwood Penn — Planning

Cecil Shrader — Right of Way

Raymond Tackett — District 4

The Vision is simple; to be the best DOH 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 DOH 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.

Meet the Deputies: Greg Bailey



WVDOT Chief Engineer of Operations Greg Bailey oversees the Operations Division and the Equipment Division, supervising about 175 employees.

A Sissonville native who still lives on the property where he was born, Bailey has a Bachelors degree in civil engineering from West Virginia Tech and a Masters degree in civil engineering from Virginia Tech. He was City Engineer for the City of Charleston from 1989 to 1992 and has been with the WVDOT for 29 years.

The Operations Division handles contracting and support service for all 10 WVDOH highways districts. More visibly, however, “They do the overall management of all our bridge inspections statewide,” Bailey said.

The Equipment Division, headquartered in Buckhannon, buys almost every vehicle used by WVDOH and provides statewide training for equipment operators and mechanics.

Bailey has a wife, Debbie, four grown children and nine grandchildren. When not mowing the grass, he spends most of his time trying to keep up with his grandkids.

Check back each month as Rusty Marks introduces another member of WVDOT’s management team.



Be Good to Your Brain: June is Targeted Awareness Month for Hard Hats



By Shane Hudnall

The West Virginia Division of Highways' Safety section has chosen hard hats, a PPE requirement, as its targeted awareness topic for the month of June. Through analysis of injury and accident data nationwide, it has become abundantly evident that hard hats lessen the severity, and in some cases eliminate the opportunity for a head injury while performing maintenance operations.

Hard hats are essential component of our PPE while working in traffic, under a bridge or during construction. Division of Highways employees are required to wear hard hats while performing any and all field operations.

All hard hats must be ANSI approved and clearly marked as such and free of any decorations that might hide damage leading to a potential hard hat failure. Hard hats are readily available and freely provided throughout all the division organizations.

Hard hats are to be worn appropriately in accordance with the aforementioned federal standard. Although the Division of Highways hasn't historically suffered from many major head injuries, we are taking a proactive approach to ensure the safety of our workers in the field by implementation and enforcement of our hard hat policy along with other PPE policies.

We here at the Department of Transportation Division of Highways Safety section would like to take a moment to thank you for cooperating with us in the implementation of this policy. We look forward to your help in making June a successful targeted awareness month for hard hats. As always, be safe.

DOT Awards Massive ADA Ramp Project

CHARLESTON, WV – The first of three major construction projects has been awarded to upgrade MacCorkle Avenue through Kanawha City.

The MacCorkle Avenue Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) ramp project is in conjunction with two other major upgrade projects on MacCorkle Avenue, which include repaving the highway from 40th Street to 56th Street, and a drainage correction and reconstruction project from 33rd Street to 40th Street. The ADA ramp project, let on May 11, 2021 and awarded on May 21, is the first of the three to be awarded.

The \$570,000 construction project, awarded by the West Virginia Department of Transportation to SQP Construction Group, is to install 105 curb cuts along MacCorkle Avenue from 35th Street to 58th Street in Kanawha City. The project is part of an ongoing plan to bring all West Virginia highways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

District 1 has set aside \$5 million a year for the next five years for ADA compliance projects. District 1 includes Boone, Clay,

Kanawha, Putnam and Mason counties.

District 1 Maintenance Engineer Kathy Rushworth said the MacCorkle Avenue project is important to improve accessibility and make it safer and more convenient to use Kanawha City sidewalks and roadways.

"We're looking forward to doing this project," Rushworth said. "We need to make our roads and highways as accessible to everyone as possible."

The MacCorkle Avenue ramp project is part of a federally mandated ADA transition plan.

DOT has already upgraded 25 percent of all ramps on state roads and highways.

"The West Virginia Department of Transportation initiated a new innovative program to systematically improve the condition of all ramps providing access to mobility challenged individuals using the state highway system," said Greg Bailey, DOT Chief Engineer of Operations.

