

HQ CONSTRUCTION

EDITION 5

APRIL 2016



A LETTER FROM WILL



We all look forward to a time in the, hopefully, not-to-distant future where our available revenue stream can keep pace with the needs of our network. Potential future increases in funding could pose a challenge for the Department to maintain a robust review process for project plans and bid documents. As a result, there is a greater risk that design errors and omissions will occur. An

inability to effectively manage this risk could lead to increases in construction costs and hinder the Department's ability to maximize the use of available highway construction funds. Obviously, as construction costs increase, any cost overruns and delays will take more funds away from other construction projects.

So, how can we; as a team; prepare for and meet these challenges and bridge the gap between design and operations? I would submit that one thing we could do is take more of a "cradle to grave" approach to delivering projects. As it relates to the preconstruction side, design teams typically visit project sites to view existing conditions firsthand but must rely on 2-D drawings to assess many proposed design improvements. We need to develop a system where staff members from the design section can spend time with inspectors on projects in order to gain experience with the construction phase and how their design plans are used. It gives them a new perspective that will help them develop better and more complete designs that may have fewer problems during construction. From the Operations side, we must build time into our daily workflows that allows for, and emphasizes, participation in various reviews during the development of projects. I speak from experience when I say that a designer

can learn a great deal and from the interaction they can have with engaged construction personnel in well organized, insightful review meetings.

Also, we should take advantage of innovation and subsequent improvements in technology that have created an opportunity to minimize errors in human interpretation and increase efficiency.

One of the newest tools for highway engineers is design visualization. Increasingly, engineers are synthesizing traditional two-dimensional (2-D) plans into various types of 3-D and dynamic 4-D models, renderings, and simulations. Design visualization offers great benefits. In addition to enhancing public involvement, it enables engineers to examine their own concepts from multiple viewpoints. Engineers can identify and communicate conflicts embedded in designs, such as relationships with structures, drainage problems, and utility conflicts.

In summary, we need to blend good, old fashioned field experience with our access to new technologies to produce a quality product. To accomplish that, we should take a team approach and foster a more collaborative environment where perspectives are shared. I feel we have some great expertise in design and operations here at TDOT that, working together, can meet the challenge before us.

I'm in.



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Lia Obaid

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WHY PROJECT CLOSEOUT MATTERS

by Jay Norris

Your project is done. There is a sigh of relief, a few murmurs thanking God, and all the important people have cut the ribbon. Finally! After the elation of being done with "that one", your office manager pokes at you. Other fires arise...life moves on. Before you realize, it's Christmas and that project is still hanging around.

There are 36 Construction Office from Memphis to Elizabethton administering work. While it is important that we all are consistent, project closeout matters. Here's why:

1. We are in volatile financial times.

When a project is not closed, the dollars encumbered to that project sit in that account and cannot be used for other purposes. Congress has passed a 5 year Bill that will help bring some stability to our delivery funds. However, as dollars sit on project numbers, it shortens our reach and project delivery. We have many needs and many shovel ready project in the hopper and every dollar matters.

2. FHWA has deemed this a priority.

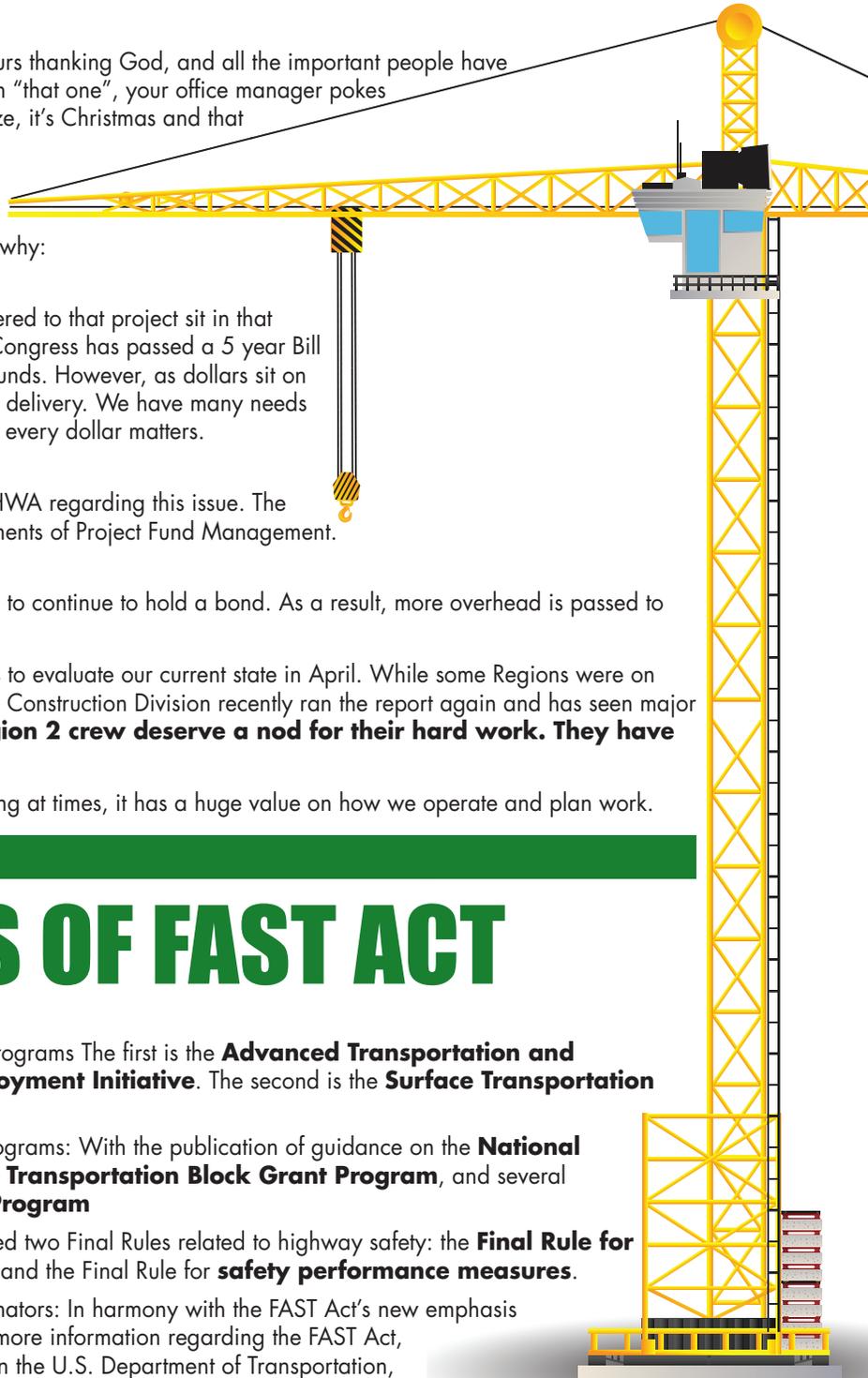
The Construction Division has recently met with FHWA regarding this issue. The Department is committed to satisfying the requirements of Project Fund Management.

3. Overhead for Contractors

Even though the project is done, Contractors have to continue to hold a bond. As a result, more overhead is passed to TDOT and prices for work increase.

The Construction Division began working with the Regions to evaluate our current state in April. While some Regions were on track, others had fallen behind due to varying factors. The Construction Division recently ran the report again and has seen major advances in this area. **Gwen Whittaker and the Region 2 crew deserve a nod for their hard work. They have closed over 100 projects this past Summer.**

More to come on this issue. While this task seems frustrating at times, it has a huge value on how we operate and plan work.



THE PROGRESS OF FAST ACT

(March 2016) <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/fastact/>

- Called for Applications for Two Competitive Grant Programs The first is the **Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment Initiative**. The second is the **Surface Transportation System Funding Alternatives Program**,
- Issued Guidance on Other Key Highway Formula Programs: With the publication of guidance on the **National Highway Performance Program**, the **Surface Transportation Block Grant Program**, and several aspects of the **Highway Safety Improvement Program**
- Issued Two Final Rules Related to Safety: FHWA issued two Final Rules related to highway safety: the **Final Rule for the Highway Safety Improvement Program** and the Final Rule for **safety performance measures**.
- Encouraged and Emphasized Efforts to Support Pollinators: In harmony with the FAST Act's new emphasis on efforts to support bees and other pollinators. For more information regarding the FAST Act, including provisions that impact other agencies within the U.S. Department of Transportation, please visit <https://www.transportation.gov/fastact/>



EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT

LORI LANGE

After completing my Civil Engineering degree from Michigan Technological University, I ventured to Tennessee and am so grateful to have spent the last 20 years in the Volunteer State. To this day, I truly appreciate the scenic beauty, quality of life and of course short winters that come with living in Middle Tennessee!

I have a strong Finnish heritage and with that consider "Sisu" an integral part of my daily life. It is very similar to the English saying, "Just do it" and requires that you continue to push yourself in ability to obtain long-term goals. Throughout my career, I have credited TDOT for giving me countless opportunities to incorporate the resilience, conscientiousness and grit to cultivate this heritage.

I spent the first 17 years of my career at the consulting firm, Gresham, Smith and Partners working primarily on high-profile, fast paced projects for the Department. I truly believe the success of those projects was a direct result of a passion for performance from not only me, but from the entire team. That experience also gave me the opportunity to become a Partner in the firm and to share the passion and success of other projects with coworkers and clients throughout the southeast.

In 2013, I accepted a position with TDOT as the Region 3 Project Development Director. This position intrigued me due to the



perseverance needed to meet Top to Bottom Initiatives established within the Department. This conviction of hard work, "Sisu", was necessary to shape a path for future success. Along this journey, I had the opportunity to meet many "hidden gems" in the Department. Employees throughout the Department dedicated to service, and a similar team spirit that I had previously never met.

Recently, I accepted the Assistant Director of Construction Position for Region 2. I feel very fortunate to be in this role, working with the Road Building Industry and a great group of colleagues who have been so helpful in my transition to the construction side of the house. This year, we will be rolling out the Constructability Review Program and I look forward to working with all the Regions in this new endeavor. I like the idea of stretching yourself, and this position allows for that opportunity.

When not working, I enjoy spending time with my family. This often entails travel to the lake, sporting events and being a spectator at my children's extra-curricular activities. My son enjoys all sports, especially basketball and football so I am fast becoming an all sports enthusiast. My daughter loves school, playing teacher and being the boss of our three-year old lab. I hope to instill in them strong family values and the importance of giving back to their community.



CONSTRUCTION LETTING SPOTLIGHT

The Department held the sixth and seventh construction lettings of 2015 on Friday, October 16th and Friday, December 4th. A total of forty-seven contracts were awarded at a combined total of \$289,245,689.67. The contract values ranged from \$46,574 all the way to \$126.3 million. The total contracts with a spotlight on the largest project for each region are as follows:

REGION 1: A total of 11 (3 & 8) contracts were awarded to Region 1 in these lettings. The largest being the construction of a welded steel plate girder bridge on S.R. 92 over the French Broad River in Dandridge, including grading, drainage, and paving in Jefferson County. This was awarded to Simpson Construction Company, Inc. for \$29,106,151.81 and has a completion date of April 15, 2019. Region 1 was awarded 65 contracts in 2015.

REGION 2: A total of 12 (2 & 10) contracts were awarded to Region 2 in October and December. The widening on I-124 (U.S. 27) from the I-24/I-124 interchange to south of the Tennessee River, including widening of the Olgiate Bridge in Hamilton County was awarded for \$126,323,413.81 to Dement Construction

Company, LLC. The contract has a completion date of July 31, 2019 and is the largest single contract awarded by the Department to date. A total of 70 contracts were awarded in Region 2 last year.

REGION 3: A total of 20 (6 & 14) contracts were awarded to Region 3 in the lettings. The grading, drainage, and paving on U.S. 31 (S.R. 7) from Bunker Hill Road to U.S. 64 (S.R. 15), and on a S.I.A. route serving Saargummi of Tennessee in Giles County was awarded to Rogers Group, Inc. for \$16,006,291.50. The project has a completion date of November 30, 2017. There were 97 contracts awarded in Region 3 last year

REGION 4: A total of 4 (0 & 4) contracts were awarded to Region 4 in the October and December lettings. The resurfacing on I-40 from west of Sycamore View to west of Davis Plantation Road in Shelby County was awarded to Standard Construction Company, Inc. & Lehman-Roberts Company Joint Venture for \$16,154,345.10. The completion date for the project is October 31, 2016. Region 4 was awarded 51 contracts in 2015.





WELCOME ABOARD

GRANT HEINTZMAN

Grant Heintzman was born and raised in the small town of Joelton just north of Nashville TN. He attended The University of Tennessee at Martin and graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Civil Engineering in 2012. During his time at Martin, he completed a co-op program with an engineering firm in Clarksville TN where he was employed until he came to work for TDOT as a GTA in the Nashville Construction office in June of 2013. He has now joined the HQ Construction Division in March 2016. In his current role, he will set up contract proposals. Also, he has begun taking on assistant admin roles in both Site Manager and Web Trns.port.



NEWS AND NOTES



- Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam and Tennessee Department of Transportation Commissioner John Schroer released TDOT's annual three year transportation program, featuring approximately \$2 billion in infrastructure investments for 79 individual project phases in 42 counties, as well as 15 statewide programs. - See more at: <http://www.tn.gov/tdot/news/39243#sthash.V8PJ2Eup.dpuf>
- TRBA/TDOT Region 1 Meeting April 29, 2016 at 10:00 AM, Location: TDOT Knoxville.
- TRBA/TDOT Region 2 Meeting April 28, 2016 at 1:30 PM, Location: TDOT Chattanooga
- TRBA/TDOT Region 3 Meeting May 05, 2016 at 1:30 PM, Location: TDOT Nashville
- TRBA/TDOT Region 4 Meeting May 06, 2016 at 10:00 AM, Location: TDOT Jackson
- 2016 Construction Symposium and Equipment Operators Training in Chattanooga from **06/27/16** to **06/30/16**.

