

Tennessee Infrastructure In The News

October 27, 2008

A daily roundup of recent news stories and opinion pieces about Tennessee transportation, water and flood control infrastructure

For the full story, click on the link below the excerpt.

Everett-Stewart Regional Airport gains grant (Weakley County Press)

Everett-Stewart Regional Airport in Obion County has been approved for a \$50,000 aeronautics grant, Gov. Phil Bredesen announced Friday. "As our communities grow and thrive, it is increasingly important that our airports stay competitive and efficient at meeting the needs of travelers," he said. "Everett-Stewart Regional Airport is vital to this region's economy and travel system. I'm pleased to support its continued growth." Funds from this aeronautics grant will be used to install new security fencing, lighting and cameras. State Sen. Roy Herron of Dresden and House Transportation Committee chairman Phillip Pinion of Union City helped secure these funds for the airport. Aeronautics grants totaling \$1,941,727 have been approved for 17 Tennessee airports through the Tennessee Department of Transportation's Aeronautics Division.

<http://www.nwntoday.com/news.php?viewStory=18418>

New I-40 exit ramp to open Monday (Jackson Sun)

The new exit ramp from Interstate 40 to Vann Drive opens Monday. The ramp at U.S. 412/Bells Highway in Jackson will give motorists another entrance to Vann Drive, helping to relieve traffic that otherwise would enter The Columns area from the U.S. 45 Bypass or other routes. A combination of federal and state funding made available to Jackson through the Tennessee Department of Transportation paid for the \$1.4 million project, according to a news release from the office of Jackson Mayor Jerry Gist. The project included widening nearly one-half mile of Vann Drive, which had to be completed before Oct. 31 in order for the city to qualify for the federal funding. The widening project increased Vann Drive from two lanes to four lanes with a center left turn lane in some areas and a concrete median in others. The widening project extended from Rushmeade Road to just before Bethel Baptist Church off Country Club Lane.

<http://www.jacksonsun.com/article/20081025/NEWS01/810250312/1002/NEWS01>

Funding shortages hold up repairs to water, wastewater infrastructure (Knoxville News Sentinel)

There is a growing gap between badly needed improvements to Tennessee's water and wastewater infrastructure and the funding to complete those projects, according to a recent study conducted by the Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance. Local municipalities, including Knox County, Loudon County and Sevier County are listed in the report as being among those in the greatest need of funding. In Roane County, for example, limited sewer capacity almost scuttled a \$5.4 million investment in a new trucking facility by Crete Carrier. After failing to reach an agreement to connect the facility to the overburdened Lenoir City Utilities Board sewer system, Crete is looking at the installation of an on-site sewer system. According to the Tennessee Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, the cost of 1,773 needed water system improvement projects increased by \$349 million between 2004 and 2005 to a total of \$3.3 billion. At the same time, the report points out, available funding for such projects is dropping. State revolving funds have dropped by 33 percent between 2004 and 2006. Federal funding has dropped by nearly 79 percent since 1980. <http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2008/oct/14/water-improvements-lacking/?printer=1/>

Editorial: Funding slowing for roads (Leaf Chronicle)

How will Tennessee pay for future roads projects? State officials are studying that question because revenue is not keeping pace with costs. The state should try to avoid going into debt to pay for new roads. Right now, Tennessee is a pay-as-you-go state. That means projects are done when enough gas tax money accumulates in the state transportation fund. The state gas tax stands at 21.4-cents-per-gallon. The federal tax is 18.4-cents-per-gallon. Most highway projects are financed with federal, state and, occasionally, local dollars. Less revenue is dropping into the state pot, though, because Tennessee motorists are driving less, and the feds are contributing less. In the past three years, federal highway funding for Tennessee has fallen more than \$237 million. <http://www.theleafchronicle.com/article/20081025/OPINION01/810250302/1014/opinion>

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