

## Tennessee Infrastructure In The News

February 16, 2010

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

For the full story, click the headline or use the link.

#### [wEATHER STRAINS tdot BUDGET \(kNOXVILLE nEWS-sENTINEL/jACOBS\)](#)

State spending \$2M above allowance for ice, snow removal A cold Mother Nature is wreaking havoc on the state's snow and ice removal budget. "As of last week, we already were \$2 million over budget for the state," Yvette Martinez, Tennessee Department of Transportation Region One spokeswoman, said Monday. According to TDOT, officials budgeted \$12 million for ice and snow removal for the winter of 2009-10. Martinez said TDOT is "looking at other areas we can cut back" to meet the demands on the snow budget. Officials are reviewing things such as less litter pick up or fewer times cutting grass, but no decisions have been made about shifting funds to account for the extra costs of winter. Region One, which includes 24 East Tennessee counties to the Virginia and North Carolina borders, budgeted \$4.8 million this winter for ice and snow removal. Martinez said Region One is \$1.3 million over budget so far this winter.

<http://www.knoxnews.com/news/2010/feb/15/weather-strains-tdot-budget/>

#### [Monday Busy For TDOT Help Trucks \(WKRn-TV Nashville\)](#)

Monday morning was a mess on the roads, one that's becoming familiar to TDOT Highway Incident Response operators George Elsenbach with the Tennessee Department of Transportation said, "We had quite a few vehicles that were spun out. We had to block lanes for them, get them out. We had some that had stalled in the lanes of traffic." As the day went on, TDOT crews kept an eye out, not only for drivers in trouble, but also for trouble spots that need to be treated. "We come across anything else a bad ramp, lanes that are slick, we call them up and tell them that spot needs attention," he said. Several cars broke down throughout the day Monday, often blocking interstate ramps. Elsenbach said, "A lot of folks don't realize how nasty it can be, how dangerous it can be, until they're broke down on the side of the road, and that tractor trailer goes by and they feel their car shake back and forth."

<http://www.wkrn.com/global/story.asp?s=11989500>

#### [Repairs To Close Bridge In Dandridge \(WVLT-TV Knoxville\)](#)

Workers will close State Route 92 bridge over the French Broad River in Dandridge next month for repairs. The Tennessee Department of Transportation said the closure will start on March 1. The contractor has been given an incentive to complete the project early in April. The project consists of repairs to steel structural stringers, removal of the asphalt surface, spot painting and applying a new bridge deck sealant. Traffic will be detoured around the bridge using US Highway 25/70 and US Highway 411/State Route 35.

<http://www.volunteertv.com/news/headlines/84433992.html>

#### [Riding The Rails \(City Paper/Garrison\)](#)

Nashville is a lot of things, but it's certainly no Charlotte, N.C., when it comes to mass transit. They're both Southern cities, similar in size, growth trends and demographics. They often compete directly for new economic development. But citizens of the banking capital voted more than decade ago to enact a new half-cent sales tax, the revenue from which led to a dramatic overhaul of the city's transportation system. The jewels of that crown were a light rail line, expanded bus routes and a more sophisticated bus rapid transit system. Meanwhile, transit innovation in Nashville — absent a local revenue source — has been modest at best. Highlights include the 2006 launching of Music City Star, which commutes passengers down a single track from Wilson County to downtown; a small, recently installed bus rapid transit line along Gallatin Avenue in East Nashville; and the 2008 opening of Metro Transit Authority's new 434,000-square-foot central bus hub, known as Music City Central.

<http://nashvillecitypaper.com/content/city-news/riding-rails>

**[Private Industry Could Help Pay For Public Transit \(Nashville Public Radio\)](#)**

Nashville Mayor Karl Dean has said local governments have to commit their own money before looking for state and federal funding. One other source might be using money from private industry, as other cities have done in several ways.

<http://wpln.org/?p=14855>

**[Plans For A Bridge Above The Railroad Tracks In Erwin Are Underway \(Tricities.Com\)](#)**

The Town of Erwin is finally getting to work on a major project that may ease a lot of frustration for people who get stuck at the railroad tracks on Second Street. For years, traffic stops near I-26's Exit 37, whenever a train rolls by. The city met recently to accept engineering drawings for a prospective bridge that will pass over both railroad tracks that run through downtown Erwin.

[http://www2.tricities.com/tri/news/local/article/plans\\_for\\_a\\_bridge\\_above\\_the\\_railroad\\_tracks\\_in\\_erwin\\_are\\_underway/41592/](http://www2.tricities.com/tri/news/local/article/plans_for_a_bridge_above_the_railroad_tracks_in_erwin_are_underway/41592/)

**[Bradley Commission Urges Completion of Corridor K \(the Chattanooga.com\)](#)**

The Bradley County Commission passed a resolution supporting the final design and funding of the completion of Corridor K through the Ocoee River Gorge in one of their monthly voting sessions on Tuesday.

[http://www.chattanooga.com/articles/article\\_169074.asp](http://www.chattanooga.com/articles/article_169074.asp)

**-Opinion-**

**[Mayor's Big Idea For Mass Transit Faces A Tough Sell \(Tennessean\)](#)**

You can't accuse Mayor Karl Dean of being a small thinker. On the heels of getting approval for a new downtown convention center, pushing changes in public schools and orchestrating a water bill hike to fix Nashville's deteriorating storm water system, the mayor is talking mass transit. Not just new bus routes or another toe-dipped-in-the-water light rail pilot project. But a serious, long-term, multi-county system that could cost as much as \$6.5 billion. Whoa. This is as huge as when former Mayor Richard Fulton orchestrated a hotel-motel tax on room rates to pay for the first convention center. It had never been done, and drew immediate skeptics. This will too. There's no question of the need. Nashville is light years — and light rail! — behind other cities in public transportation. Anyone who has ever visited or lived in a city with subways or commuter trains knows they are cheap, convenient and comfortable.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100216/COLUMNIST0101/2160336/1007/OPINION>

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