

The INSIDE LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

JULY 2022

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ADOT

Maintaining stability through transition

As the agency transitions to a new fiscal year, we are also aware of the upcoming fall election, which means changes in our state's top levels of leadership. Something we must remember is that at ADOT, we always have a job to do. We'll continue to maintain highways, serve customers and manage the many systems we are responsible for.

We will continue to make ADOT better every day, and while we don't always know what the future holds, what remains the same is that we're committed to our mission — Connecting Arizona. Everyone. Everywhere. Every Day.

Looking ahead

There is much to do in the coming fiscal year and here is what's on the horizon.

ADOT is awaiting word from the Federal Highway Administration on our grant application to secure more than \$300 million from the [federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) to support the 26-mile widening of Interstate 10 between Phoenix and Casa Grande. Governor Doug Ducey and the Arizona State Legislature already appropriated \$400 million of state funds this year to support the project. This widening project is our top priority as it will enhance safety and positively impact our state's economy. Check the [ADOT IJJA webpage](#) to learn about the US 93 grant application and other upcoming grants.

Relief is coming to Interstate 17 north of Phoenix with improvements to alleviate congestion, and improve safety and traffic flow. The [I-17 Improvement Project](#) will improve 23 miles of the interstate between Anthem Way and Sunset Point, including road widening, bridge replacements and the installment of an 8-mile flex lane system — a new feature for Arizona's highway system.

Our ADOT leaders are continuing the conversation on [diversity, equity and inclusion](#). I want everyone to feel valued, welcomed, respected and included at ADOT. I want to remind everyone that living our AIR values and embracing DEI go hand-in-hand. Don't be afraid to bring up issues with your manager or supervisor. It's how we can make ADOT better than we found it.

I'm pleased that we continue to fine tune our strategic plan and the goals set for the agency. What's also important is the execution of the plan, making sure leaders cascade the A3 process from one level to another. It's an important process in ensuring everyone understands and is accountable in meeting the objectives associated with the strategic plan goals.

Thank you for the work you do, each and every day. It's what ensures that everyone gets Safely Home. ☰



John Halikowski
ADOT Director

The INSIDE LANE

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ADDRESS ALL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS TO InsideLane@azdot.gov.

A WEB VERSION OF THIS NEWSLETTER CAN BE FOUND ON ADOTNET OR AT AZDOT.GOV/INSIDELANE.

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Share your best cover shot

Do you have photos showing off the scenic side of transportation in Arizona? Share them with us and we might put your photograph on the next cover of The Inside Lane. It can be a great picture of an MVD office, a beautiful highway shot or even an artsy photo of construction materials. Whatever the subject, the photo should highlight some aspect of the work happening here at ADOT. Submit your original, digital photographs to InsideLane@azdot.gov in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.



On the cover

This month's cover photo, taken by ADOT Video Services in May, shows crews working to repair damage caused to US 60 by a break in Tempe's municipal water line near McClintock Drive. Read how ADOT crews supported Tempe's freeway repair work on page 5, and see more photos on [ADOT's Flickr page](#).

PLAN TO DEVELOP ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING NETWORK UNDERWAY

ADOT teams working quickly to meet deadline

EARLIER THIS YEAR, the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Energy announced that nearly \$5 billion will be made available to states under the new National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Formula Program (NEVI). The program is aimed at building out a nationwide electric vehicle charging network to expand equitable electric vehicle adoption, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and create jobs.

Arizona's share is \$76.5 million over the next five years, but to access those funds, ADOT must submit a deployment plan by Aug. 1, 2022. With such a quick timeline, ADOT's project team is "moving fast and furious," says ADOT Performance/Asset Manager **Thor Anderson**.

Beyond technical specifications, the deployment plan also includes a major public outreach component. Currently, ADOT employees are working with a consultant to seek input from the public and key stakeholders, including utility providers, representatives from the electric vehicle industry, municipalities and many others.

Anderson said that meetings with stakeholders are happening on a weekly basis and that a virtual public involvement meeting is scheduled for mid-July.

"It's a bit like that roller coaster at Disney California Adventure Park that starts at the bottom and takes you right into a loop-de-loop," Anderson said of the accelerated effort. ■

~ Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist

John Dougherty, ADOT Video Services



TOP 5 THINGS TO KNOW

1. A primary goal of the program is to fill gaps in the existing fast-charger network along highways so electric vehicle drivers can feel comfortable making long-distance trips.
2. To start, the plan will focus on the state's designated alternative fuel corridors, which consist of Arizona interstates, but more routes could be added in the future.
3. According to federal guidance, electric vehicle charging stations will need to be spaced every 50 miles along the corridors.
4. The initial plan will identify general locations for charging sites. Future analysis will be needed to determine actual, specific locations.
5. More information is available on [ADOT's new Arizona Electric Vehicle webpage](#). A recent [ADOT news release](#) has additional details.

MEET THE TEAM

TSMO Systems Management Group

THE ADOT Systems Management Group includes 25 employees within six different units. Assistant State Engineer **Jerry James** describes the group in the Q&A below:

Explain what your unit does.

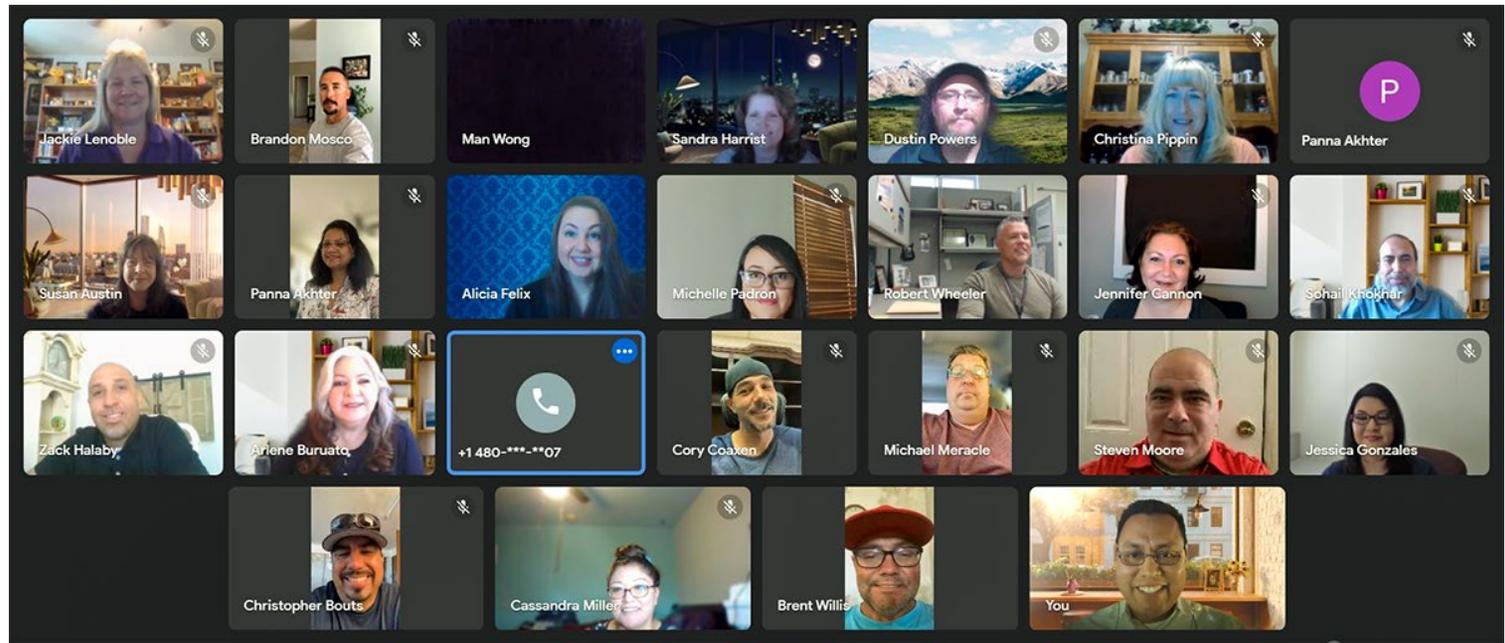
In general, the group functions beyond the division and serves as cross-divisional support to multiple divisions. We provide service support to help operate and maintain our system by providing contracts, budgets, tracking and condition assessments of our assets and Class C over-dimensional load permits.

What is unique about your team?

We're not focused on one specific area. The group is made up of six different units, and those units manage their specific functions.

The Systems Management Administration, which includes myself, has oversight of all the units and the maintenance services program for both IDO and TSMO in regards to funding and support. The unit develops the annual maintenance budgets and also serves as the Federal Highway Administration Emergency Relief Liaison.

Maintenance Administration consists of two primary functions. Contract Services oversees and develops procurement maintenance contracts for services that include asphalt, guardrails and pavement markings. The unit also oversees the operations and management of 28 rest areas statewide.



Part of the Systems Management Group, including **Jerry James** (bottom right).

Maintenance Management Services provides services and maintains the activities in PeCoS, the Highway Maintenance Management System where labor, material and equipment are tracked for usage. This data is used in conjunction with the feature inventory system and level of service condition assessment to determine historical maintenance spending and develop the annual priority-based budget.

Feature Inventory Services collects and maintains the feature inventory system of all roadway assets, including structures, roadway features and roadside safety devices, and collects data from new construction projects.

Statewide Permit Services safeguards the traveling public and infrastructure by analyzing movement to permit over-dimensional loads and filming projects. This unit also regulates outdoor advertising along highways under the federal Highway Beautification Act and assists the Statewide

Encroachment Permits Team by recording their permit data.

Finally, our Level of Service team does annual assessments and inspections of our system. They look at the conditions of our pavement, guardrails, signage, fences and more. Their assessments are then utilized to help develop the annual priority-based budget to determine the distribution needs of our annual budget.

What is a recent success story for your team?

Maintaining customer engagement has been the group's recent success. Going through leadership and personnel changes at the unit levels created challenges; however, customer engagement remained constant. Each team member's contribution played a tremendous role in the operations and maintenance of our transportation system through communications and collaboration, such as moving over-dimensional loads through

construction zones or reopening rest areas that have been closed for years to support the trucking industry during a pandemic. The group persevered through being understaffed and still maintained excellent customer engagement.

How does your team embody AKA — The ADOT Way?

We're always looking for ways to improve our business practices, whether that's simplifying our contract process to serve customers better or creating standard work with our emergency relief program. The team has embraced [AKA — The ADOT Way](#) and has done a great job finding cost-efficient measures in their operations, including installing energy-efficient fixtures at our rest areas and strategically planning out the annual asset condition assessment routes that eliminate any backtracking for fewer miles traveled. 🇺🇸

~ Ashley Richards, Senior Communications Specialist

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN CHALLENGE

We are all being challenged to embrace [AKA-The ADOT Way](#) and practice our skills of problem solving and process improvement. To do this, everyone needs to:

- Focus on improvement of core processes
- Reduce waste using **(Plan-Do-Check-Act)**
- Document and submit a kaizen via the [kaizen tracker](#) while in the ADOT network

ADOT teams surpassed the kaizen goal of 7,200 kaizens for this fiscal year!

KAIZEN COUNT

The number of kaizens submitted by ADOT employees so far this fiscal year is

7,644

For more information on the Kaizen Challenge, visit the [Kaizen Challenge page](#) on ADOTNet.

Yuma Maintenance develops safer way to remove rusty nuts from damaged guardrail

IT TAKES MANY labor-intensive steps to remove a damaged section of guardrail, so even shaving a few minutes off of a single step in the process can add up to a lot of time. It's even better when the time-saving technique improves safety by reducing the chances of hand injuries or strained muscles.

But that very combination of improvements came out of an innovation from Yuma Maintenance, where Highway Operations Technician **Johnny Figueroa** developed a quicker way to remove rusted nuts from damaged guardrail.

The problem was rusted nuts sometimes couldn't be removed with a 3-inch socket that crews typically used, requiring them to be removed by hand.

"It was pretty much like a weld," Figueroa said. "Mother Nature pretty much welds it over time."

It occurred to Figueroa that by simply using an impact gun and a roughly 6-inch socket, those stubborn nuts would pop out much more easily. After ordering the equipment, crews found that what would normally take 15 minutes could be accomplished in just one.

"We're trying to find the safest, easiest way," he said.

Removing nuts from a section of damaged guardrail usually takes about a half day, but using the impact gun with the deeper socket shaves about an hour off that part of the job.

Rusted nuts are a bigger problem in parts of the district that get more rainfall, so Figueroa especially recommends crews in wetter parts of Arizona adopt the improved process. Crew members used to not look forward to removing nuts from guardrail, but Figueroa said they now fight for the job.

"It's crazy how things like that can help out a lot," he said. "Everybody wants to do it now." ■

~ Garin Groff, ADOT Communications



Johnny Figueroa, IDOT

Highway Operations Technician 2 **Mikhael Harp** demonstrates the new technique while repairing guardrail.



Mohamed Elomeri, IDOT

ADOT crews coordinated with Tempe to reopen US 60 after water main break

ON MAY 7, A BREAK in a city of Tempe water line beneath US 60 resulted in the freeway's closure between Rural Road and Loop 101.

ADOT crews quickly responded and worked with the city's contractors to reconstruct portions of the freeway, complete concrete paving, lane striping and other work. Eastbound lanes were reopened on May 15 and westbound lanes were reopened on May 22.

"The Tempe waterline break was certainly a catastrophic event, but when events like this happen, impressive people swing into action," ADOT Central District Administrator **Randy Everett** said. "Several ADOT employees were part of this impressive group. For three weeks straight, many of our hardworking employees spent a good part of their lives assisting in putting the freeway back together. Their job was to assure the freeway was fully safe and ready to open to the traveling public and they did a masterful job in making that happen."

Coordination and good communication were also critical to reopening the road, ADOT Spokesman **Doug Nintzel** said, adding that virtual project management meetings were held early each morning to keep everyone informed.

"From a communications perspective, the ADOT team working on site either immediately answered our calls for updated information or got back to us very quickly. That was very helpful as we relayed information to media members," Nintzel said. "This unscheduled project involved impressive teamwork between Tempe, the contractors and ADOT." ■

~ Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist



AT ADOT, it's difficult to sum up anyone's job in just a few words. That's why we're giving employees across the agency the chance to share a little bit about what they do every day. If you'd like to be featured in a future issue, please send an email to InsideLane@azdot.gov and we'll provide you with a questionnaire.

Clementine Webb has worked at ADOT for more than 37 years. She currently serves as the Administrative Services Officer 2 for ADOT's Broadband Office.

How do you describe your job to someone outside the agency?

Servant to taxpayers of the State of Arizona

What's your typical workday like?

While I enjoy working with others, I make sure I stay focused on the objectives and goals of the unit.

What do you want other ADOT employees to know about you?

I have been mentoring Grand Canyon University and Central High School students, teaching them how to live by three main principles that have been a part of my life for decades: authenticity, passion and purpose. Living out loud in these three areas will create a lasting

legacy of a wellness lifestyle. You may not know what my motto has been for all these years at ADOT — happy to be here, proud to serve!

What's on the top of your bucket list?

Holy Land Tour 2024

What's your favorite holiday?

Easter

What's your favorite dessert?

German Chocolate cake

Best concert you've seen?

Lauren Daigle

~ Compiled by Kathy Boyle, Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications

LOOK

BACK

For as long as there have been roads in Arizona, there have been people who plan, build and maintain them. It's those skilled women and men who have made this state's transportation history a remarkable one. View [previous Look Back stories](#) on ADOTNet.

Dust storm safety a focus in 1976

MANY THINGS have changed since 1976, but dust storms were just as much a safety concern for drivers 46 years ago as they are today. This photo was shared in the June 1976 issue of ADOT's employee newsletter, Newsbeat, along with this caption —

“Conrad Flippen, left, and Al Scott of the Sign Shop inspect one of 29 dust storm information displays recently placed at rest areas near Interstate 10 and I-8 in the Casa Grande area. Signs warn motorists about danger, suggest actions to take during storms.”



Today, ADOT still helps drivers stay safe by sharing [news releases](#), creating [informational websites](#) and developing innovative tools like the [first-of-its-kind dust detection and warning system](#).

~ Angela De Welles, Senior Communications Specialist

WINNER,

WINNER!

LAST MONTH'S Where in AZ??

Challenge was tough, but we did have a winner. Transportation Construction Technician 3 **Joe Nava** provided the correct response and was awarded with a special Inside Lane gift bag. The photo was taken by Video Services Supervisor **John Dougherty** at the Bumble Bee Schoolhouse, now a private residence, built in 1936. Bumble Bee, a ghost town, is about 55 miles north of Phoenix.

There's no new contest this month, but if you're looking for a fun activity, check out the [ADOT Kids travel bingo game](#) on ADOT's website.



It's a great way to keep the family entertained on any summer road trip!



Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications