

The Road Ahead



DOT Employee Newsletter

May 2016

Skip Spann Connector is Open!



The Skip Spann Bridge, the first lighted bridge in Cobb County, officially opened to the public April 27. The 416-foot long, nearly 108-foot wide bridge, spans I-75, just north of Chastain Road in Kennesaw and is part of the Skip Spann Connector, a community improvement project increasing accessibility to Kennesaw State University, one of the fastest

growing colleges in Atlanta.

The \$17 million project added four lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, benches and landscaping along both sides of the bridge and a roundabout at Townpark Lane and Busbee Drive. The changes are expected to reduce traffic congestion on I-75 and Chastain Road by about 20 percent while

providing safer accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists.

The bridge's name recognizes Skip Spann for his dedication in developing the Town Center Community Improvement District. Project funds were provided by a partnership between CCDOT, GDOT, KSU and TCCID.



Cobb County

YourGOV Gets Upgrade!

See a gnarly pothole? Backed up storm drain? Busted sidewalk?

CCDOT's smart phone and web app, YourGOV, which enables citizens, including our amazing CCDOT employees, to submit work order requests and track them along the way, now sports a more user-friendly mapping upgrade! **ALL** users must register when they log in to the new system. Prior users: Log in with the same email connected to your old account to see your request history in the new system. To use YourGOV, go to cobbdot.org and click on **Work Request**.

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Inclement Weather Trucks Have Arrived!

CCDOT is now the proud owner of four SPLOST-funded Inclement Weather Vehicles, F250s equipped with plow attachments, spreader hoppers, directional arrow boards and strobe lights for safety. These vehicles will keep the public safer come winter and will be used for immediate response at high-priority locations, fire stations, EMA and 911 facilities, police precincts and hospital emergency room roadways.

Crews had been treating these areas manually, which was very time consuming. When this winter comes, WE ARE READY!



Salt Storage Barns Stand Tall

Several salt storage barns were built this spring in preparation for the inevitable.

One barn stands at McCollum International Airport, and a second was recently completed on Lee Industrial Blvd.

Salt may be just a memory for now...but winter is only seven months away!



Two GIS Story Maps Now Online



A new way to experience CCDOT's projects, services and divisions is now available for our community via the department website. GIS story maps take viewers on interactive tours through photos, maps and videos that make the world of transportation more accessible to travelers in Cobb County. Enjoy our first two story maps at the direct links below.

Cumberland CID Transportation Projects:
<http://arcg.is/1Tdgm3E>

Transportation Management Center (TMC):
<http://arcg.is/1UWwgSp>



On the DOT: Division-by-Division News

Administrative

The Latest

The division welcomes part-time Fiscal Tech **Jan McElhannon**, who brings several years of experience in accounts payable from the City of Marietta, and bids farewell to Transit Accountant **Zhan Qin** as she pursues career opportunities in the private sector.

Up Next

Grants & Accounting is moving into the costing allocation phase of priority-based budgeting, which aligns spending with policy and community priorities. Managers will review all of the programs and assess how each position allocates time. Each service or program is scored based on its contribution to desired results so that tax dollars can be allocated to those with the greatest impact.

Airport

The Latest

The FAA and State have approved funding the rebid for improvements to the north apron. Astra Group, Inc. is the apparent low bidder. The four-month, \$4 million project is expected to begin in early July with construction of a new taxiway connection between Taxiway A and the north apron to relieve congestion on the parking apron. The second phase will include rehabilitation and expansion of the north apron between the restaurant and the control tower.

The BOC has accepted a grant from the State to cover 75 percent of the installation costs for a Medium Approach Lighting System with Sequenced Flasher to Runway 27. Navcon, LLC is the apparent low bidder. The three-month, \$800,000 project, with design funding from the Town Center CID, should begin in early July. The approach lighting systems will help pilots judge distance and alignment for landing. During the project, the runway will be closed for several overnight periods during work near the threshold of the runway.

Up Next

The BOC recently approved a Town Center CID (TCCID) proposal to construct an aviation park on airport property. It will be located at the corner of Barrett Lakes Boulevard and Cobb Place Boulevard where the new Zagster Bike Rental operation is a popular rental location. The approximately three-acre park will serve as an aircraft take-off and landing observation area for the public as well as a park for Noonday Creek Trail. TCCID will secure 100 percent of the design and construction costs through allocated funding and philanthropic contributions to the Town Center Community Alliance.

Engineering

The Latest

Pre-Construction: Eight 2016 SPLOST projects—including improvements at Sandy Plains Rd./Davis Rd., Dallas

Highway at Lost Mountain/Mars Hill Rds., the Windy Hill/Terrell Mill Rd. Connector, the Cumberland area (cameras and message signs), and others—have been awarded and will enter the design phase this spring/summer.

Current RFPs that are advertised and/or going through the selection process are Cherokee St. and McCollum Pkwy at Ben King Rd. as well as bridge replacements for Brookwood Dr. over Clay Branch, Little Willeo Rd. over Willeo Creek, Mars Hill Rd. over Allatoona Creek, and Old 41 Highway over CSX Railroad.

The 2016 -2017 task order contracting firms were submitted for BOC agenda approval on May 23.

Construction: The I-285 Multi-Use Bridge has been awarded to Northwest Express Roadbuilders (\$10 million). Notice to proceed has been issued for construction, and the anticipated completion date is August 2017. The Windy Ridge Parkway Pedestrian Bridge has been awarded to Brassfield & Gorrie, LLC at \$11.3 million. The anticipated construction completion date is July 2017.

Projects under construction in the Cumberland area include improvements to Windy Hill Road, the Windy Hill Diverging Diamond Interchange, the I-285 EB Ramp at Cobb Pkwy, the I-285 WB Ramp, Spring Rd./Circle 75 Pkwy at Cobb Pkwy, and Cobb Pkwy at Herodian Way. Repairs for Richard D. Sailors Pkwy over Silver Comet Trail Bridge will occur this summer.

Up Next

The 2016 SPLOST Program list of upcoming projects for the second half of this year is being finalized to be posted in June. The Canton Rd. Corridor Improvement RFP will advertise this summer. Sidewalk and intersection improvement work for Lower Roswell Road West is anticipated to begin in late summer.

Planning

The Latest

On April 1, FTA Region 4 issued a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) determination on the Connect Cobb Environmental Assessment. The Connect Cobb project proposes the addition of Arterial Rapid Transit (ART) along U.S. 41/Cobb Parkway. The majority of the ART system would operate on dedicated guideway from the Kennesaw area to Cumberland, beginning at the Kennesaw State University station, and would be accessed at 14 stations in Cobb County. From the Cumberland area, service would continue to the existing MARTA Arts Center Station via I-75 in existing HOV lanes and City of Atlanta arterials. The FONSI is available to the public on the department website. The FONSI includes documentation of comments received during the public review period along with CCDOT's responses.

The Cumberland Circulator and Route 10X plans are complete. The Cumberland Circulator consists of two



On the DOT: Division-by-Division News

core routes in the Cumberland area. Also, event day service from park and ride locations to Sun Trust Park is scheduled to begin April 2017.

Up Next

RFPs for pedestrian safety planning and comprehensive transit service planning are hitting the streets this summer. These plans will begin fall 2016.

Road Maintenance

The Latest

Construction for the Circle 75 inclement weather material storage facility is nearing completion. Additional storage locations include McCollum International Airport and Lee Industrial Blvd. as well as Mars Hill Road, where the facility will be part of the new fire station.

The division also recently received four new F250 4X4 Crew Cab pickup trucks equipped with salt spreader hoppers and snow plow attachments for rapid inclement weather response.

Up Next

Road Maintenance is actively seeking to fill 17 full-time equipment operator (I/II/III) and seasonal maintenance tech (II) positions.

A transition to a paperless work order system is in progress to allow supervisors to assign work orders to crew chiefs electronically via WiFi-enabled laptops and iPads.

Traffic Operations

The Latest

Utilities welcomes **Jonathan Sanders**, construction inspector, to the team.

As of April 18, CCDOT has implemented ProjectView invoicing and a paperless approval process for payments, which allows Construction contractors to submit their invoices and receive approval electronically. **Jeff Neiswender** was the first to bring a contractor on board to participate. Construction contract admins are working to implement the elnvoice process for more contractors.

Transit

The Latest

The new Cobblinc bus began its run on Route 10 on May 11, giving the public its first look at the redesign in motion.

Transit also is celebrating the one-year anniversary of the FLEX buses, which provide a deviated fixed route service designed to help meet the mobility needs of communities when regular fixed route service may not be feasible.

Training for use of K-9 units and robots in threat situations that may occur on buses took place this week.



Kristen Orton, Jimbo Brown and Jason Bridges at West Sandtown Road sidewalk project.



Windy Ridge Parkway Bridge project rendering



Cobblinc running on Route 10 on May 11.



Employee *Spotlight*



Tshiams Katala took the lead on CCDOT's eco-friendly efforts as the department's Environmental Compliance Engineer and PEACH Roads Manager in February 2016. In his current roles, Tshiams ensures that our projects comply with state and federal environmental regulations, funding requirements and design policies. However, there is more to Tshiams than ticking

compliance checkboxes as he continues the important work of lessening our impact on nature.

Certainly his position is fitting for a recipient of degrees in water resources and environmental engineering as well as civil engineering from Villanova University and the University of Johannesburg in South Africa, respectively. Yet along his professional journey, Tshiams has also followed his family lineage into education, spending eight years teaching in the engineering field in Johannesburg and locally at ITT Tech before working in compliance at GDOT in 2014.

Tshiams Katala *Environmental Compliance Engineer*

"My mother was a primary school teacher, my father teaches French at Kennesaw State University and my grandfather was an elementary school teacher, but I'm the only child [of five] who picked up teaching," Tshiams said.

Having education in his DNA has led him to this work he truly enjoys because he can guide others as a subject matter expert in environmental matters for the county he now calls home—when he isn't traveling to other countries like Columbia where he took up Spanish last year to add to his repertoire of English, French and three African languages.

Beyond environmental compliance, Tshiams also takes the lead on the dance floor. He has enjoyed Latin social dancing for nearly a decade and has performed competitively since 2011. Dancing keeps him in tune to the Latin and modern music influences of his home country, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Tshiams also claims credit in helping to bring competitive Latin dance to Atlanta, where the World Salsa Championship will take place this December.

"Ever since I was exposed to competing, I have been addicted," he said.

The two-left-footers among us may not be convinced of how easy it is to fall in love with complex Latin footwork, but Tshiams encourages taking the first steps: "Everyone has more rhythm than they think they have!"

Drew Raessler *District 3 Engineer, Construction*

Since joining CCDOT as an intern in 2010, Drew Raessler has taken on several roles, from operator in the TMC to traffic signal design engineer to his current position as the District 3 Engineer leading construction. He's a quintessential example of working your way up in an organization; however, his path was not always clear. In fact, when it came down to choosing a college, attending Indiana University to study music was among Drew's top three options. Lucky for us, he ultimately chose engineering at the University of Georgia to follow his interests in math, science, and problem-solving (while continuing to play his instrument of choice, the trumpet, for the Redcoat Marching Band).

With no shortage of challenges requiring creative solutions, Drew has found that engineering—specifically in transportation—provides a perfect mix of helping people and working with infrastructure.

"There's a heavy design component. There are all kinds of problems that can be solved with engineering, but at

the same time you have to take into account how people think when they see a traffic signal that looks a certain way and how they react to different circumstances," Drew said.

Now that he has completed his master's degree in civil engineering at Kennesaw State, Drew is equipped to bring new innovations to his work. He can also enjoy more quality time with his wife, two-year-old daughter, and newborn baby boy! And there's additional time for his hobbies, which include woodworking and, yes, playing the trumpet, now for his church.





iCobb Mobile

*Cobb County Communications
at Your Fingertips!*

iCobb Mobile, a unique communications app for Cobb County Government employees, enables you to review medical plan information and receive important county communications 24/7. The iCobb app is:

- Available for both iOS and Android.
- Allows you to choose which communications you would like to receive and to streamline and target messages to specific groups.
- Links to the county's medical benefit providers so you can find information you need at a moment's notice.
- Provides inclement weather closure or delayed opening notifications directly on your phone.

Instructions

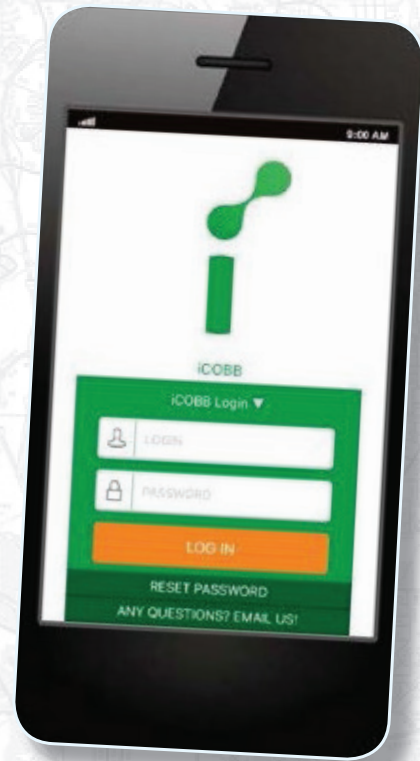
Step 1: Download iCobb Mobile

- Visit Google Play or the Apple App Store on your smartphone.
- Search for "iCobb Mobile" and download the free app.
- Once the download is complete, log in using the following credentials:
Username: icobb
Password: 4icobb!567
- Accept the Terms of Use for the app.

Step 2: Create Your Profile

Once you log in, you will be directed to create your profile.

- All fields are required.
- Make sure "Get Notifications" is selected to ensure you receive all of the important county communications. (If your phone sends an additional request for the iCobb Mobile app to send you notifications, select "Allow.")



- Click "Create."
- Your email and new password will become your new login information for accessing the app.

Step 3: Choose Your Segments

You will see a list of segments, which allows you to view the content that is most relevant to you. Opt into segments by swiping the green button to the right. Opt out by swiping the gray button to the left.

- If you work full-time for the county, opt into the Full-Time Employee segment.
- If you are a Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) plan member, please opt into that segment.
- If you are a Kaiser Permanente member, please opt into that segment.
- If you waived coverage, please opt into that segment, and opt out of BCBS and Kaiser.
- If you are an employee of either Elected Officials or the Board of Commissioners, please opt into the appropriate segment.

If you have problems loading iCobb Mobile to your phone, please call 1-866-910-0168 or email support@complyrx.com. Enjoy your new app!



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

2016 marks 67th MHAM Observation in U.S.

You are Not Alone

Are you feeling blue despite the blue skies or lacking the spring in your step this season? Cobb County provides an excellent benefit to help you manage stress, burnout, family conflicts and other difficulties. The county's **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** offers free, confidential counseling and referral services through a network of professionals in psychiatry, psychology, social work and finance. You may reach the EAP at any time by calling 1-800-869-0276 or visiting eapconsultants.com. For additional details, contact Human Resources.

Five Tips for Finding Life Balance

1. Value yourself, and avoid constant self-criticism.
2. Take care of your body with healthy meals and **plenty of water**, exercise and rest.
3. Surround yourself with good people.
4. Set realistic personal and professional goals.
5. Break up monotony by trying new activities.

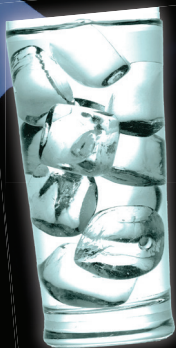
KEEPING HYDRATED

IN THE FIELD

Why is Water So Important?

Dehydration is the loss of water from the body. As you age, you are more at risk for dehydration.

- Your body's ability to conserve water is reduced.
- Your thirst sense becomes less acute.
- You are less able to respond to changes in temperature.



How Much Water Do You Need?

We want you to stay healthy and hydrated in the field. With the summer heat fast approaching, keep water nearby!

The rule of thumb is

Weight divided by two = No. of Ounces needed (e.g., 150 lbs divided by 2 = 75 ounces or ≈9 glasses of water a day)

Water makes up **60%** of your body weight and plays a critical role in body functions. Every system in your body depends on water:

- Helps flush out waste
- Moistens tissues
- Lubricates joints
- Carries nutrients to cells
- Protects organs
- Regulates body temperature

Carry a water bottle

Take a water bottle with you out in the field.

Get in the habit of hydration

Drink water in the morning, at each meal, and throughout the day.

Chose hydrating snacks

Try watermelon, cucumbers, oranges or applesauce. These foods help keep you hydrated.





Welcome to the Cobb DOT Family!

- **Trellis Love** – Operations
- **Debbie Watkins** – Operations
- **Shakiera Jenkins** – Accounting
- **Darrin Tennyson** – Road Maint.
- **Mathew Bristol** – CobbLinc
- **Jamal Mainor** – CobbLinc
- **Charles Young** – Road Maint.
- **Dave Messer** – Road Maint.
- **Ashley White** – Engineering
- **Tshiams Katala** – Engineering
- **Anthony Redding** – Road Maint.
- **Larry Crews** – Road Maint.
- **Janice McElhannon** – Accounting
- **Joseph Jenkins** – Road Maint.
- **Antavious Lindsey** – Road Maint.
- **Michael Mack** – Road Maint.
- **Roy Steenhoek** – Road Maint.
- **Maria Corona** – CobbLinc
- **Torie Anderson** – Administration
- **Brittany Lavender** – Planning
- **Gabriel Liegey** – Administration
- **Demetrice Dotson** – Engineering

Wishing
you a...

Happy
Birthday

MAY

JEFFREY LETNER	3
JOHNNY PAYNE	4
DANIEL NICHOLS	4
ANDREW RAESSLER	4
SHERRY BARTLEY	15
LYNN BIGGS	21
BOBBY CHAMBERS	21
GARY PONGETTI	21
DANIEL FARIST	23
LEROY CUNNINGHAM	24
STEPHEN SPANN	26
EUGENE BLAKELY	28
NORMAN KENNEDY	30
TRELLIS LOVE	30

JUNE

WILLIAM BENNETT	2
DEAN VICZNESKY	2
TIMOTHY VERSHURE	3
DAVID MESSER	9
KRISTEN ORTON	9
COREY JENNINGS	10
JERRY COTTON	16
JAMES COURSEY	18
ROXANNE REAGAN	22
DALLAS CAIN	24
DEBORAH WATKINS	24

JULY

PATRICK LEWIS	2
ZHAN QIN	3
ABIMBOLA EVANS	5
CYNTHIA STRICKLIN	7
MICHAEL JONES	9
MARIA CORONA	13
HUGO PLAZA	13
MARK SMITH	13
DARRELL EMMETT	20
LARRY WILLIAMS	25
LEONARD PRICE	30
MICHAEL MARTIN	31



DOT Snapshot






We gathered for delicious Costco pizza and great company Tuesday, May 24!



MEET THE CREW MONDAYS!

Communications needs your help with our new social media feature: "Meet the Crew Mondays!" Please submit on-the-job photos of you and/or your crew to give the public a peek into the great work that you do year-round. Be sure to include names from left to right, and share details on what you do. Send information to Torie.Anderson@cobbcounty.org.

  @cobbcountydor  @cobbdot

UPCOMING EVENTS

June

Annual Cookout TBD

Dump the Pump Day 16th
apta.com

Ride to Work Day 20th
ridetowork.org

July

Ice Cream Social TBD