



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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TN.gov/tdot

Gerald F. Nicely, Commissioner

Tennessee provides its citizens and travelers one of the best transportation systems in the United States. We keep Tennessee moving by utilizing new technology to improve efficiency of the system and through maintenance and construction of our transportation network. Having sensitivity to our environment and giving voice to our communities as we build our transportation system are important priorities of the Department of Transportation. Tennessee's highway system stretches over 87,000 miles, enough to circle the world more than three times. Of that figure, 14,150 miles are on our state-maintained highway system representing 16 percent of the total highway miles within Tennessee. However, the state system carries approximately 75 percent of the traffic. Included in the state highway system are 1,104 miles of interstate highways. Although the interstate system makes up just over 1 percent of the total highway mileage, it carries approximately a quarter of all the traffic in Tennessee. Other transportation modes in Tennessee include:

- 20 short line railroads operating on 836 miles of rail
- 6 major rail lines on 2,098 miles of rail
- 75 public-use and commercial airports
- 126 heliports
- 24 transit systems (bus, van and light rail) serving all 95 counties
- 1,062 miles of navigable waterways
- 231 miles of greenways, sidewalks and trails
- 9 bicycle trails on 1,500 miles

Mission, Values, Strategic Emphasis

The mission of the Department of Transportation is to plan, implement, maintain and manage an integrated transportation system for the movement of people and products, with emphasis on quality, safety, efficiency and the environment. We strive to achieve the public's trust and confidence by practicing four basic values: communication, accountability, consistency and integrity. Our "Strategic Emphasis Areas" are:

- 1) Increase transportation system safety,
- 2) Address customer needs and priorities,
- 3) Maximize and manage resources, and
- 4) Develop workforce capabilities.

History

In 1915 the first state government authority to oversee transportation services began with the creation of the State Highway Commission. At that time the state system included less than 5,000 miles of road. The Commission was restructured and became the Department of Highways and Public Works in 1923 and by an act of the General Assembly in 1972 became the Department of Transportation incorporating all modes of transportation.

Services

The Tennessee Department of Transportation, at any given time, has about 4,200 employees working on the transportation system with an annual budget of over \$1.9 billion. Much of the agency is organized around three bureaus: the Administration Bureau, the Engineering Bureau, and the Environment and Planning Bureau. In addition to the three bureaus, there are six staff divisions also reporting to the Commissioner: Aeronautics, Civil Rights, Internal Audit, Legal, Project Management and Multimodal Transportation Resources.

Major duties of the department are to:

- Plan, implement, maintain and manage Tennessee's transportation system.
- Administer funding and provide technical assistance in the planning and construction of state and federal aid road programs for cities and counties.
- Provide Incident Management on Tennessee's Interstate System through TDOT SmartWay, an intelligent transportation network of cameras and dynamic message signs.
- Staff transportation management centers in the four largest urban cities in Tennessee.
- Provide motorist information through Tennessee 511 and TDOT SmartWay, via the agency Web site.
- Construct and maintain 19 rest area facilities.
- Administer program for control of outdoor advertising adjacent to interstate and state highways.
- Issue and administer special permits for movement of overweight and over-dimensional vehicles.
- Prepare and distribute city, county and state road maps, aeronautical charts and airport directories.
- Promote safe driving behaviors on highways through federal funding for public awareness and education programs.
- Provide management, technical and financial assistance, and supervision to public, private, and nonprofit public transportation agencies in the state.
- Administer funding and assistance in location, design, construction, and maintenance of Tennessee's 80 public airports.
- Support improvements in Tennessee's railroads and rail service.
- Inspect over 19,000 Tennessee bridges, 80 public airports and all of Tennessee's railroads.
- Maintain state park roads.
- Operate Reelfoot Airpark and ferry operations.
- Respond to initiatives of the Tennessee Aeronautics Commission.
- Provide aerial photography and mapping services to all state agencies.
- Provide aircraft for state executive transportation and economic development recruiting.

- Administer highway beautification programs, including “Stop Litter,” “Adopt-A-Highway,” and “Roadscapes” programs.
- Provide grants to all Tennessee counties for litter abatement and litter prevention education.
- Provide cycling trails that connect or go through state parks and natural areas.

Funding

Funding to support the services and programs provided by the Department of Transportation comes from “user fees” collected by the state and federal government. These primarily include vehicle registration fees, gasoline and diesel fuel taxes. Tennessee receives a portion of federal gas taxes which are 18.4 cents per gallon for gasoline and 24.4 cents for diesel. Since 1989, the state’s transportation-related fuel taxes have been 20 cents per gallon on gasoline and 17 cents per gallon on diesel fuel. An additional 1.4 cents is collected for the inspection of volatile fuels, including diesel and gasoline. The state gasoline tax is currently distributed on the following basis:

- Cities and Counties..... 7.9 cents
- State General Fund 8 cents
- TDOT 12.7 cents

Related Boards and Commissions

Tennessee Aeronautics Commission

607 Hanger Lane
 Building 4219
 Nashville, Tennessee 37217
 (615) 741-3208

Commissioner Gerald F. Nicely

Tennessee Department of Transportation

Gerald F. Nicely has been the Commissioner of Transportation for Tennessee since January 2003. Nicely also had the distinction of serving simultaneously in two state cabinet posts. In December 2005 the Governor appointed him Interim Commissioner of Safety and he served in that position until January 2007 while still holding the Commissioner of Transportation position. Nicely joined TDOT after more than 30 years of local government experience and a track record of successfully forging public-private partnerships that helped transform Nashville. He served as Executive Director of Nashville’s Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency from 1979-2002. Under his leadership, MDHA spearheaded a wide range of development and housing initiatives and was viewed as one of the best-run local agencies in the country. He served a two-year term as president of the Public Housing Authorities Directors Association. Nicely serves on the Board of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials. He was a Founding Board member of the Frist Center for the Visual Arts and a Charter Board member of the Nashville Housing Fund. He has received numerous awards for public service including: The Tennessee Association of Public Administrator’s Public Administrator of the Year in 2006, the Nashville Kiwanis Club’s co-Nashvillian of the Year for 2001 (his wife Donna was the co-recipient), the Nashville Engineering Center’s Distinguished Builder Award in 2007, and the Apollo Award for 2006 by the Nashville Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. He holds both a B.S. and M.S. in economics from the University of Tennessee and is a U.S. Army veteran. Nicely is married to Donna Nicely, director of the Nashville Public Library system, and has two daughters and three grandsons.

