

The INSIDE

LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

JULY 2021

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 7



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◀ Happy 5th Anniversary
to The Inside Lane,
which launched in July
2016

ADOT

REFLECTIONS ON THE ROAD AHEAD AND THROUGH THE REARVIEW MIRROR



John Halikowski
ADOT Director

HAPPY NEW YEAR, ADOT!

While it may be summer from the calendar perspective, it is a new fiscal year for the agency. That means a time to reflect back while looking ahead, much like looking through your rearview mirror while driving.

Reflecting on this past year, it's been one where we faced many challenges together. But, due to the innovative

spirit and collaborative mindset from you, we met each challenge directly, and proceeded to solve and overcome these issues head on. Here is just a sample of accomplishments from the 2020-21 fiscal year:

- ❑ Developed and maintained the [COVID-19 Resource Center](#) on ADOTNet, to share important updates to keep you and your families safe during the pandemic.
- ❑ Launched a new computer system at the Motor Vehicle Division, [AZ MVD Now](#), which proved to be a wise decision in servicing our customers and offering more electronic services than ever before. We had to quickly change our service model from in-person to online and phone transactions, to help minimize face-to-face interactions.
- ❑ Continued to find ways to keep training and learning opportunities available using virtual technology, from Lunch and Learn

sessions to Arizona Management System training classes, to the new Learning and Development Center and the catalog of online courses and programs, plus safety classes led by our Border Liaison Unit.

- ❑ Managed an increase in the number of employees working from home or other locations, while continuing to serve our customers and maintaining productivity.
- ❑ Hosted the annual Leaders Connection meeting, virtually, which had more than 800 managers and supervisors in attendance. This event was important for me so I could continue to communicate and share our vision of connecting our AIR values, Kaizen principles and AMS elements to what we now call [AKA - The ADOT Way](#).
- ❑ Continued to meet our True North, Safely Home, with our Incident Response Unit, maintenance and statewide emergency crews offering traffic management assistance during crashes, wildfires, etc., while also helping stranded motorists. From thank you notes to Director Pin presentations, your literal lifesaving efforts are noticed by me, division leaders and the public.
- ❑ Reinstated merit-based incentives based on MAP performance.
- ❑ Implemented over 6,000 kaizens, which identified waste in our processes.

Sadly, we lost 14 employees this past year, five of whom died due to COVID-19. Their contributions to this agency will not be forgotten.

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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 snap shots that show 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 photo was taken by Transportation Engineering Specialist **Abel Federico** along Interstate 8 on his way to Hyder in August 2020. He was trying to get a shot of the full moon while it was low on the horizon. He used a long exposure to compensate for low light. What he got instead was this image of a semi-truck traveling west bound. The light streaks were caused by the running lights.

The Inside Lane is featuring a series of articles about teams of employees working on [ADOT's 2021 Strategic Initiatives](#), which are excellent examples of doing things [AKA - The ADOT Way](#). Employees are adapting to new concepts, using a total systems effort and highlighting a process in action.

Work from Anywhere Program

ADOT employees share their thoughts about teleworking, office space sharing

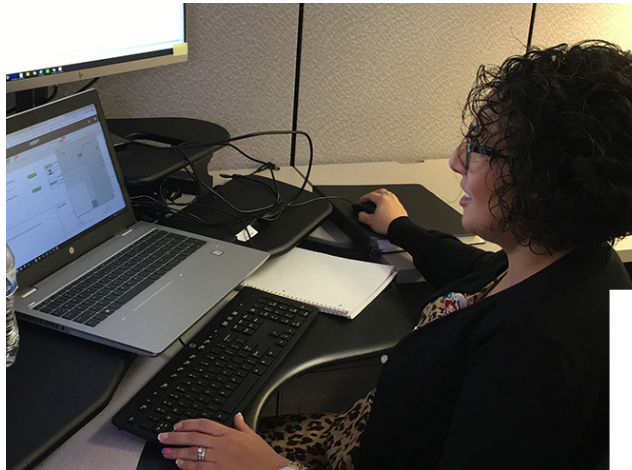
For Senior Auditor **Candice Orona-Khaivilay**, teleworking enables her to get work done without distractions. But she also likes sharing a workstation part of the week with her co-workers. "There is never any clutter. The space is always clean," she said.

Orona-Khaivilay is among 27 employees on the Audit and Analysis team and 10 Financial Management Services Division employees participating in a pilot program about teleworking and workspace sharing.

Their comments and data are being reviewed by the Work from Anywhere Program Strategic Initiative team led by Environmental Programs Manager **Julia Manfredi** and Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer **Chuck Stojakovich**. The team — about 30 ADOT employees representing several divisions and groups — is conducting a PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) regarding equipment, training, standard work and other issues. They are reviewing feedback from an agency-wide survey regarding challenges of working remotely and sharing office space. More Work from Anywhere details are expected in the next couple months.

Business Process Analyst **Rashmi Shah** likes teleworking because it allows quality family time. Her two children had online learning from home during the 2020-21 school year. "Technology has given us so many options that even when I telework, I still feel I am with my teammates," said Shah, who teleworks three days and uses a shared office workstation twice a week.

Business Services Analyst **Will Halstead** describes his teleworking experience as positive but he experienced challenges getting his pilot laptop configured correctly. "Ultimately, I was able to login to the remote environment and complete my work tasks. I enjoy working from home and not having a daily commute," he said. Using shared



Vickie Murphy, Audit & Analysis
Senior Auditor **Candice Orona-Khaivilay** works in a shared office space. She was among Audit and Analysis team members who participated in a pilot regarding teleworking and sharing office space.

office space also has worked well for Halstead. "I like how easy it was to plug my computer into the shared workstation," he said.

Senior Auditor **Christine Tran** struggled with teleworking initially due to technical issues but hasn't had problems recently. "I enjoy a quiet environment at home where I can focus on researching or conducting a virtual meeting. I sometimes feel disconnected from not seeing and talking to

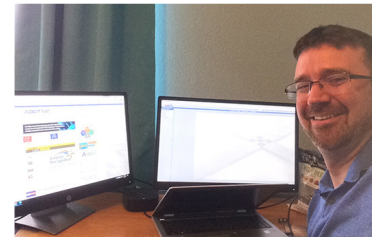
my team members in person," said Tran, who shares office space once or twice a week.



Business Process Analyst **Rashmi Shah** shows where she teleworks at home.

Audit Supervisor **Lora Davis** said office sharing takes a change of mindset. "We follow the standard work process, which was executed well and office sharing is working for me and my team," she added. At first, Davis found teleworking difficult due to limited access to applications and databases as well as frequent internet or system disconnections. She works remotely three days a week and shares office space twice a week. "Teleworking is great now. When signing

onto remote access, it is user-friendly and painless," she added.



Business Service Analyst **Will Halstead** enjoys working from home and not having to commute.

Audit Supervisor **Beth Duda-Rel** and Chief Auditor **Vickie Murphy** share an office with a sit-stand desk. Duda-Rel holds weekly huddle meetings with her team when they are in the office together. "My team continues to experience small issues with connecting to their remote desktop when teleworking. IT needs to know what's not working to help them make our remote experience better," Duda-Rel said.

Senior Auditor **Dominique Garcia** and her team members work remotely four days a week and office share once a week. "Teleworking reduces stress with an improved work-life balance. It increases productivity and job satisfaction as it allows me to be more effective. We have clear objectives, set expectations and performance indicators that we keep track of on a weekly basis," she said. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

Employee group collaborates to optimize ADOT physical footprint

A team of ADOT employees is taking a deep dive to maximize the use of facilities that the agency owns or leases around the state.

Enhancing communications about facility construction and maintenance, and standardizing how the new Facility Advisory Committee prioritizes building project recommendations are among the top goals of the “Optimize ADOT Physical Footprint” 2021 strategic initiative.

Statewide, ADOT has about 1,500 buildings valued at about \$950 million, including 515 facilities occupied by employees. The inventory also includes warehouses, storage yards, rest areas and other structures.

Administrative Services Director **Sonya Herrera**, Facilities Design and Construction Manager **Michael Nelson** and Facilities Management and Support Group Manager **John Hetzel** are leading the 30-member team, which represents various ADOT divisions and groups across the state. Team



John Dougherty, ADOT Communications

Workstations are positioned in this universal workspace along the perimeter of the building at 205 S. 17th Ave, allowing natural light throughout the space.



This “Nexus Room” is a flexible space with conference rooms for informal meetings, collaboration, an alternate place for remote workers to work and a waiting area.

John Dougherty, ADOT Communications



This break area kitchenette serves an entire floor in the building at 205 S. 17th Ave. The refrigerators and freezers are provided by ADOT.

members began their PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-ACT) activities in January.

One of the group’s first steps was to conduct “Voice of the Customer” interviews to collect data and information about current challenges and to establish goals.

The PDCA team divided into small groups to develop plans to improve the project request form and enhance communications about project status.

The team also is tasked with consolidating office space so that ADOT can move out of some leased facilities. For example, ADOT is saving about \$1 million a year in leasing, maintenance and utility costs by vacating a building at 28th and Washington streets.

The Optimize ADOT Physical Footprint team is working with the Work from Anywhere PDCA team regarding universal space in some facilities to support remote workers, shared workstations and full-time onsite employees.

“In universal space, the design of work areas and furnishings is standardized to accommodate the office and business functions of most ADOT units as well as workstation sharing with employees working alternate schedules. Also, ‘hotel’ workstations can be reserved by ADOT employees on an as-needed basis,” Nelson said.

For example, the second floor of the engineering building, 205 S. 17th Ave., was renovated with universal space. The Environmental Planning Group is relocating from a modular building with 37 employees occupying only 19 workstations. The second floor of the ADOT building, 1801 W. Jefferson St., also is being remodeled with universal space.

“It’s not just about saving money. It’s also about improving and enhancing the work environment for our employees,” Herrera said.

With some employees moving out of modular buildings into other ADOT office space, the modular buildings can potentially be relocated and completely renovated to provide office space in other areas of the state, she added.

Nelson provided examples of recently finished or planned construction projects that are reducing ADOT’s physical footprint:

- ✓ The Globe, Seligman and Williams maintenance yards’ new office buildings will have universal space for highway maintenance crews. Globe also is getting an additional restroom.
- ✓ Modular buildings from Flagstaff were renovated and relocated for the Chinle MVD and the Show Low Construction Office to replace substandard buildings.
- ✓ The Sanders Port of Entry’s customer service area was redesigned for better workflow and to separate the employees from the public with bullet-resistant construction.
- ✓ Show Low MVD customer service representative and greeter stations are being rearranged to support new operational methods.
- ✓ The building at 1655 W. Jackson St. is undergoing renovation of about 10,000 square feet. Plans include universal space with 60 workstations, four offices, conference rooms, meeting rooms, and flex and collaboration spaces.
- ✓ All three floors in the annex, 206 S. 17th Ave., will be remodeled to reflect the universal space plan in coming years. ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

KAIZEN KORNER

KAIZEN 2021 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

To reach our goal of 7,200, everyone is expected to complete a kaizen on their own and do one additional kaizen.

KAIZEN COUNT

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

6,084

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

Upgraded health check for loop detectors improves traffic data quality on roadways

A newly developed system helps ADOT traffic engineers quickly spot failing loop detectors, which are used to monitor traffic information on Valley highways.

The process, developed by the Transportation Systems Management and Operations Division's Systems Technology team, evaluates data from loop detectors. A report identifies loop detectors needing repair and loop detectors providing the most accurate traffic data. A Google Sheets report is shared with maintenance and leadership.

ADOT collects traffic data from about 7,000 vehicle detectors to manage its freeway network. The data, which is collected every 20 seconds from in-pavement [loop detectors](#), provides information about freeway volume, occupancy and vehicle speed.

Previously, ADOT used a computer program developed by the University of Arizona, but it was outdated and tied to a single workstation. It also did not check the work done in the field versus the loop detector health.

Since ADOT already had access to the database, work could now be done in-house instead of requiring a third party.

"This all allows for a more regular check of the quality of data entering the database instead of relying so much on happening upon issues by chance," Intelligent Systems Developer **Steven Cheshko** explained. "Now, Systems Technology and Systems Maintenance teams can work together when it comes to the hardware and issues can be addressed in a timelier manner."



The black lines are the epoxy covering the saw cuts that house the loops, which detect the number of vehicles on the roadway.

Besides Cheshko, others involved in developing the new system are Systems Technology Manager **John Roberts**, Systems Maintenance Group Manager **David Locher** and Transportation Engineering Specialist **Arash Cyrus**. ■

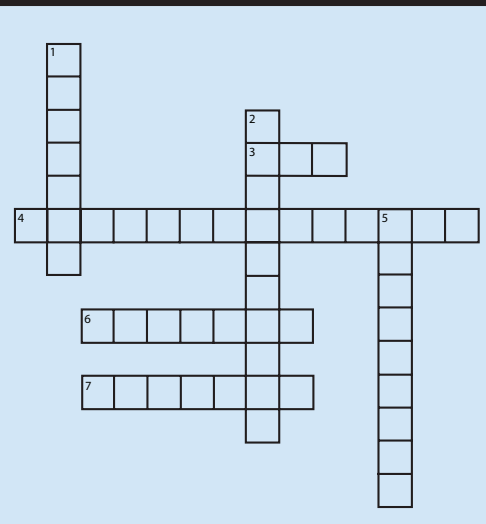
~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

AKA-The ADOT Way crossword puzzle

Directions: Use the clues to fill the words in the puzzle. Words can go across or down. Letters are shared when the words intersect. Need extra help? Visit adotnet.az.gov/aka for clues.

Email a photo of your completed crossword puzzle to InsideLane@azdot.gov by **July 14**.

Everyone who successfully completes the puzzle will be entered into a random drawing for a great prize! We'll reveal the answers and the winner in next month's newsletter. [You can print out a larger version of the crossword puzzle.](#) Good luck!



ACROSS

3. Arizona Management System acronym
4. Taking responsibility for our actions
6. Total _____: Making choices based on the benefit to the agency
7. Problem _____: Utilizing standard methods to solve problems

DOWN

1. Valuing all people and appreciating their qualities
2. Performance _____: Employing visual indicators
5. Doing what's right

Looking ahead in the new fiscal year

While the agency awaits further action by the U.S. Congress on transportation authorization and funding, we continue to study, build, improve and maintain our current transportation system. Here is just a snapshot of the projects we are working on:



- ❑ Replacing an historic bridge, the Pinto Creek bridge (shown above) near the Miami/Globe area.
- ❑ Adding ramps and flyover structures on SR 189 in Nogales. The project greatly enhances the movement of trade from Mexico; scheduled to be completed this fall.
- ❑ Coming later this summer or early fall is the [I-10 Broadway Curve](#) project. This one will be a major improvement to the most-traveled Key Commerce Corridor in the metropolitan Phoenix region, and is expected to be under construction for at least three years. I would encourage everyone to be aware of the construction as it will impact travel to/from Phoenix and Tucson. You are our ADOT ambassadors.
- ❑ Preparing for the [I-17 Flex Lane project](#) in 2022, which adds a north-south flex lane on I-17 between Anthem and Sunset Point Rest Area. This project will provide necessary relief when traffic backs up in either direction due to a crash or heavy traffic, and is part of our Key Commerce Corridor.
- ❑ Improving pavement statewide with preservation projects, along with bridge structures as outlined in the [2022-2026 Five Year Construction Program](#).

- ❑ Completing the study and working with our partners (Gila River Indian Community and Maricopa Association of Governments) to expand [I-10 between Phoenix and Casa Grande](#).
- ❑ Enhancing our transportation system with technology advances from LED lighting to loop detector data tools.

We're focusing on strategic ways to improve our operations and ability to meet customer needs.

- ❑ Completing the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) process on 13 strategic initiatives, which support the agency's strategic plan. These range from the "Business Disruption Plan" to "Optimize ADOT Physical Footprint," to the "Work from Anywhere Program" and two initiatives that address project prioritization and transportation investments.
- ❑ Employing a new employee performance management system, AZPerforms!, which other state agencies have adopted and utilized.
- ❑ Enhancing the recognition program at ADOT by continuing to provide ways to recognize our employees who demonstrate [AKA - The ADOT Way](#).
- ❑ Continuing efforts to support professional development with such programs as our "Aspire to Lead," "Leading Self," and "#ADOT Leads." These programs help further your career at ADOT and enhance your personal development as a leader.
- ❑ Finding ways to engage with our customers like the [Arizona Mobile ID](#) app and keeping the traveling public informed with our wide-ranging social media tools.



Yes, it has been a long and difficult year, but we all should be proud of what we accomplished this past year, and look forward to the progress this coming fiscal year. Thanks to all of you for doing things The ADOT Way!

WINNER,

WINNER

ADOT JUMBLE

WE HAD A GREAT RESPONSE to last month's [ADOT Jumble contest!](#) Many of you solved the puzzle and submitted your answers, but there can only be one winner. Congratulations to Active Transportation Program Coordinator **Donna Lewandowski** (pictured below), whose name was selected from a random draw of entries. She received a special gift bag from Assistant Communications Director for Internal Communications **Kathy Boyle**, including an Arizona Highways magazine, Arizona Highways jigsaw puzzle, The Inside Lane stress ball, an ADOT lanyard and more. 🎁

ANSWERS: 1. Kaizen; 2. Respect; 3. Leadership; 4. Work 5. Integrity

FINAL ANSWER: When putting an emphasis on AIR values, Kaizen principles and AMS elements, ADOT employees always go **The ADOT Way**.



Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications