

# The INSIDE

# LANE

A newsletter for employees of the Arizona Department of Transportation

MAY 2024

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 5



Find Your Lane

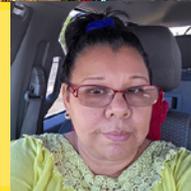
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◀ See how ADOT helps businesses thrive.  
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◀ Meet the Five-Year Construction Program team.  
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◀ Learn what Teresa Gurulee does at ADOT.  
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**ADOT**

**JOINED THE ADOT TEAM** almost 18 years ago. Currently, I work in the Alternative Delivery and Major Projects Division as the P3 Initiatives Group Manager. Prior to this role, I was the project manager for the [Interstate 10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project](#) and am continuing to serve in that role.

### What has it been like to lead the largest urban renewal freeway project in ADOT's history?

Working as the project manager for ADOT's largest urban freeway reconstruction project has been extremely challenging and rewarding. The project provides me the opportunity to collaborate with team members and stakeholders so that, together, we make well-informed and educated decisions that keep the project moving forward. I've learned having a team that you can lean on and trust in is invaluable. As a manager, I've also learned the importance of taking each team member's expertise and knowledge into consideration in order to delegate effectively, ensuring that the entire team succeeds in its goals.

### What do you want employees to know about CD roads?

If you've driven through the Broadway Curve area recently, you've most likely seen the immense amount of work taking place throughout the corridor. While all of the project's major components will improve motorists' commutes through the project area, I personally am excited about the construction of the [Collector-Distributor](#) or CD roads. These CD roads will move traffic entering and exiting the freeway within the Broadway Curve area off the mainline and onto barrier-divided lanes. For example, traffic traveling westbound on I-10, heading to the airport, will exit the mainline around Baseline Road and use the CD roads to access State Route 143, bypassing the US 60 traffic entering I-10. This new configuration will remove the conflict points that currently exist with the three freeways converging in a short distance.

Over the next several months, you will see portions of the CD roads begin to be utilized during construction. Please anticipate change and drive 55 mph. We are also beginning a campaign to educate drivers on how to utilize the CD roads when they are complete. There will be a learning curve for all of the people traveling through the corridor. I encourage everyone to become familiar with the information and share it with your friends and family.

Read more about Collector-Distributor roads on [Page 3](#). ■



**Amy Ritz**  
*P3 Initiatives Group Manager  
Alternative Delivery and Major  
Projects Division*

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### On the cover

*This aerial photo, provided by ADOT's I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project team, shows the new Collector-Distributor roads being constructed between 32nd and 40th Streets, which are a major component of the I-10 Broadway Curve (BWC) Improvement Project that runs along Interstate 10 in both directions from south of Ray Road to Interstate 17 by Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Do you know how the I-10 Collector-Distributor Roads will work? Learn how by reading the article and viewing the map on [Page 3](#).*

### Share your photos

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. 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](mailto:InsideLane@azdot.gov) in JPEG format (no larger than 10MB). Along with the photo, please provide a brief description and your name/title.

IN CASE YOU'RE  
ASKED ABOUT IT



## FIND YOUR LANE: Navigating the new I-10 Collector-Distributor roads



I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project Team

◀ Crews work on what will be part of the new Collector-Distributor roads.

**B**Y NOW, MANY OF US, along with our friends and family members may have driven through a section of the I-10 Broadway Curve (BWC) Improvement Project that runs along Interstate 10 in both directions between approximately Ray Road and Interstate 17 by Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

And a few of us may have heard a thing or two about the project's construction of Collector-Distributor or CD roads through the I-10 Broadway Curve area. So what are these roads and why are they being constructed?

The I-10 Broadway Curve area is where three major freeways meet, all within a short distance of each other, which is one of the reasons why we see traffic congestion through the Broadway Curve area — the stretch of I-10 between Baseline Road and 40th Street. One of the main goals of the I-10 BWC Improvement Project is to reduce traffic congestion and travel time through this area. The construction of CD roads will help alleviate some of that traffic congestion and reduce travel times by separating the I-10 mainline traffic from the local traffic that's exiting and entering the freeway.

Navigating the CD roads is going to be a new experience for many motorists in the Phoenix area, but no need to worry because the Find Your Lane: Navigating the new I-10 Collector-Distributor Roads Educational Campaign has launched. As part of this campaign, the project has created a CD Roads information page: [i10broadwaycurve.com/findyourlane](http://i10broadwaycurve.com/findyourlane). On this page, you will learn more about how CD roads will affect commutes. The information page includes a map of the CD

roads system that illustrates the entrance and exit points. There is also a [short video](#) that explains how to navigate the new roads, as well as a section with frequently asked questions and answers. This information page also contains a list of scheduled community outreach events where project team members will be available to answer questions from the public.

So, as you become more familiar with the I-10 Broadway Curve area's new CD roads and how they work, be sure to share the information and map with friends, family members and others. You can download and print the [CD Roads map](#). For questions, contact the I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project by emailing [info@broadwaycurve.com](mailto:info@broadwaycurve.com).

~ Marcy McMacken, Community Outreach Project Manager



### Stay ahead of the curve

The I-10 Broadway Curve Improvement Project, ADOT's largest urban freeway reconstruction project, runs along 11 miles of Interstate 10 between the Loop 202 (Santan/South Mountain Freeway)

and I-17 near Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

It is identified in the Maricopa Association of Governments' Regional Transportation Plan, funded in part by a half-cent sales tax approved by Maricopa County voters in 2004 through Proposition 400. MAG identified the

need for this project to reduce travel times on I-10 during peak hours, improve airport access; support ridesharing and transit; and prepare the region for future growth projections.

More information, photos and maps are available at [i10broadwaycurve.com](http://i10broadwaycurve.com). Listen to a podcast at [azdot.gov/podcast](http://azdot.gov/podcast).

The INSIDE

LANE

MAY 2024

We provide highway infrastructure and transportation services.

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# ADOT helps minority-owned and women-owned businesses succeed



Owners of minority-owned, women-owned and disadvantaged small businesses learn how to make their businesses more successful through events like the October 2023 DBE and Small Business Conference presented by ADOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

ADOT Video Services

**S**YLVIA SMITH'S TWO SMALL transportation companies transformed from struggling to thriving, thanks to ADOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

"Without the DBE program, my businesses wouldn't have survived because the pandemic hit us pretty badly and it was hard to compete with big businesses. My

husband, Jeremiah, suggested that we try for government contracts and that's what led me to ADOT's DBE," said Smith, who owns GJH Motors LLC and GJH Logistic Services with her husband.

After becoming [DBE-certified](#) in 2023, she landed a contract with ADOT to do preventive maintenance work on heavy equipment for the [Interstate 10 Broadway Curve](#) project.

Smith is among the owners of about 1,000 minority-owned, women-owned or socially and economically disadvantaged businesses that have opportunities to work on ADOT projects through ADOT's [Business Engagement and Compliance Office](#) (BECO).

BECO has been recognized as a trend-setter in how it administers the DBE Program and for implementing initiatives to boost DBE participation. Contracts funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) rose from 6.49% in 2012 when BECO first started to 11.27% in 2023 — a 74% increase. DBE businesses were awarded more than \$586 million from 2013 to 2023. Having a DBE program is a USDOT requirement to receive federal funding.

"BECO is one of our hidden gems in the agency with the amazing work they do. They don't get the splashy news and congratulations like ribbon cuttings for our projects. However, they work hard and are major contributors to the success of those projects," said ADOT Director **Jennifer Toth**.

DBE businesses are certified by one of the [Arizona Unified Certification Partners](#), which ensures compliance with federal regulations related to disadvantaged and small business inclusion.



Courtesy of Sylvia Smith

*Sylvia and Jeremiah Smith are owners of GJH Motors LLC, a certified DBE business.*

"Our goal is to level the playing field for DBEs to compete fairly for federal contracts. We're proud of our DBE program, and our dedication and support of DBEs and the small business community," said Employee and Business Development Office Administrator **Tina Samartinean**.

Because of BECO's success, ADOT was inducted for the eighth year into the Arizona Million Dollar Circle of

Excellence award, presented by the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Minority Business Development Center. ADOT's BECO also received the Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award from the WTS Advancing Women Advancing Transportation organization's Metropolitan Phoenix Chapter in 2023 for contributions made in advancing women in transportation.

Smith said she is taking advantage of many BECO programs, including the [Business Development Program](#).

"I'm excited to get training. I am looking forward to learning how I can market my business to prime contractors," she added.

## BECO services include:

- Business Coach on Demand - small business focus on becoming more competitive within the transportation industry.
- Expos, conferences, DBE certification webinars, virtual 1-on-1 assistance, [task force meetings and workshops](#), ADOT/AZ Associated General Contractors joint cooperative meetings, biweekly DBE newsletters.
- [OJT Supportive Services/Workforce Development](#) provides educational and training opportunities for women, minorities, veterans and economically disadvantaged individuals to advance in the highway construction industry. Programs include the [National Summer Transportation Institute](#) in partnership with Arizona State University and the [Construction Academy](#).
- BECO provides guidance, training and education to ADOT departments advertising, awarding or administrating USDOT contracts.

ADOT BECO conducts a Disparity Study to develop the overall Triennial DBE Goals required for each USDOT agency. ADOT implemented its [new triennial FHWA DBE goals](#) for federal fiscal year 2024-2026 of 12.55%, which was recently approved by FHWA. ADOT's BECO also conducts an [Availability Study](#) to reevaluate the DBE goals based on the current available market pool.

For questions about ADOT's DBE Program or BECO, please fill out the [BECO Connects Form](#). ■

~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist

# PROGRAMMING OFFICE

The Multimodal Planning Division's *Programming Office* includes three employees and one vacant position. The group members describe their work below.

### Explain what your group does.

The Programming Office develops the annual update of ADOT's [Five-Year Transportation Facilities Construction Program](#), which is based on the Long Range Transportation Plan. The process involves determining which projects will be funded each year based on the needs of the system, available funding and project readiness.

We also staff the [Priority Planning Advisory Committee](#), which reviews changes to the five-year program before it goes to the State Transportation Board for final approval, and manage the electronic [State Transportation Improvement Program](#) system. This system contains all transportation projects programmed by ADOT in the five-year program and the 13 Councils of Government and Metropolitan Planning Organizations throughout the state. It is approved annually by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. We deal with almost 900 projects annually.

Finally, our office staffs the State Transportation Board's [AZ SMART Fund](#) program, which provides state grants to cities, towns and counties for design, match or grant development to help them more effectively compete for federal discretionary grants.

### What is the one thing you'd like employees to know about your team?

With only four employees, we are a very small group but our primary deliverable — the five-year program — impacts the entire agency and state.

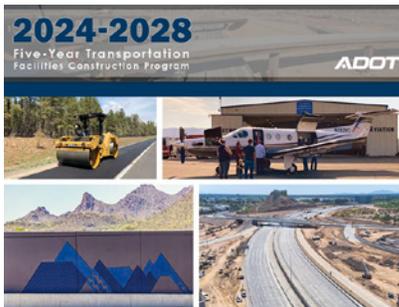
### When has your team been results-focused?

Our team is particularly results-focused when putting together the five-year program to ensure we account for and maximize every dollar available for projects in greater Arizona, Maricopa County and Pima County. This requires us to work with a wide variety of entities, including the Project Management Group,



**Lisa Danka**, programming manager; **Veronica Ruiz Ronquillo**, programmer for MAG and Sun Corridor; **Meagan Bell**, programmer for PAG and greater Arizona

Project Resource Office, Financial Management Services (FMS), Transportation Systems Management and Operations Division, subprogram managers, Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and Pima Association of Governments (PAG). Because there are so many moving pieces, we need to have an eagle



eye on numbers. We created an Excel model which uses red/yellow/green visuals to help us quickly identify if we're over or under programmed so we can make adjustments.

### Tell us about an idea that improved a process for your team.

Developing the five-year program involves 16 processes and 19 internal and external groups. We developed an integrated project plan, which tracks the processes and deadlines, and includes responsible parties for each. We review the draft plan with every group to gain concurrence. This project plan allows us to see across the agency and anticipate the next steps.

### How does your team respond to customer needs?

We do check-in calls at least once a day to review what's in the queue, prioritize and assign work, and discuss challenges. We respond quickly to requests, even if only to say we'll get back to you. We also try to anticipate needs in advance. We

have regional assignments so we know who is responsible for handling certain inquiries. And we practice "dynamic prioritization" based on the time of the year. For example, in the first quarter of the state fiscal year, our priority is transit projects. In the second quarter, we focus on subprogram managers as they develop their project lists for the next five-year program. In the third quarter, we develop the tentative five-year program with a focus on agency leadership as they deliberate numerous policy issues, projects and subprograms. In the fourth quarter, our first priority is handling requests from FMS or project managers. ■

~ Compiled by Ashley Richards, Senior Communications Specialist

**Innovation Marketplace**

**Innovation:** The renewal of a product, or a service by applying new processes, introducing new techniques, or establishing successful ideas to create new value.

Submit an Innovation: Innovation Form

For Upline Leaders: Highlight Request Form

An innovation is the renewal of a product or service by applying new processes, introducing new techniques or establishing successful ideas to create new value.

Employees are encouraged to submit innovations that are shareable in the [Innovation Marketplace](#). Contact your [Lean Coach](#) if you have questions.

*At ADOT, solving problems is what we do. Keep submitting quality innovations to the new and improved Innovation Marketplace!*



**Teresa Gurulee is an accounting specialist 1 with the Fuel Tax Reporting Unit (FTRU) in Financial Management Services. She has been with ADOT for seven years, two years in Refunds as a contractor and five years with FTRU.**

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

I work in the Fuel Tax Reporting Unit (FTRU) under Financial Management Services. I assist IFTA (International Fuel Tax Agreement) motor carriers with filing their IFTA fuel tax quarterly reports through AZ MVD Now, and if they submit a paper report by mail, internally in MAX. Additionally, we also help fuel suppliers/restricted distributors that bring fuel (aviation, gasoline and diesel) into Arizona with the monthly fuel tax reports.

**Why do you choose public service?**

I've always been able to interact with people from all walks of life. I've had a lot of experience working with the public. Most jobs I've had dealt with the front desk or answering phones.

**What do you do to ensure that you're easy to work with?**

I am a very good listener. I always try to give a customer an answer, whether it's the public or any of my colleagues. If I can't, I will research or escalate to get an answer.

**What's on the top of your bucket list?**

Ride on an airplane.

**Favorite show/movie/documentary that you've watched?**

The last movie that I really enjoyed is "Nothing but the Truth," circa 2008. You have to wait till the end when the source is revealed. No cheating!

**Do you have an interest, hobby or special talent that people would be surprised to know about?**

I am a flutist! And believe it or not, I can still twirl a baton. But my greatest interest is in the Bible. I try to live by Bible principles, which I believe is why I care so much about people and truly want to help everyone to the best of my abilities rather than just seeing it as part of my job. One of my favorite things to do is drive my truck down any highway or lonely dirt road with the windows down, without a care in the world.

**Best concert you've seen?**

Los Tigres Del Norte. ■

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

**ASRS and Nationwide launch co-branding of supplemental savings program**

**THE ARIZONA STATE Retirement System (ASRS)** and Nationwide are launching a joint logo for the state of Arizona employee supplemental savings program.

Previously branded as Arizona SmartSave and Nationwide, the new combined branding of ASRS and Nationwide highlights their long-held partnership. The new logo is featured on the website, [Arizonadc.com](http://Arizonadc.com), and will be rolled out in an email campaign, materials and other communications platforms.

The state of Arizona offers supplemental savings plans for employees to set aside money from each paycheck toward additional retirement income. These plans offer a tax-advantaged way to invest and can help bridge the gap between what the employee has in their pension and



Social Security, and how much they'll need in retirement.

"ASRS has actually had a hand in helping to oversee these plans from a fiduciary perspective for quite a long time, so this isn't a new partnership," said ASRS Strategic Communications Manager Nathaniel Brengle.

"The ASRS has always promoted supplemental savings as a way for members to boost their retirement income — making sure members have access to low-fee plans with a high level of oversight has always been important to us," he added.

**Available plans include:**

- 457(b) Traditional tax-deferred plan
- 457(b) Roth after-tax plan

More information is available on [Arizonadc.com](http://Arizonadc.com) or by calling 800-796-9753. Additional information or requests to attend ADOT groups' staff meetings are also available by emailing local representative John Bennett at [J.Bennett@Nationwide.com](mailto:J.Bennett@Nationwide.com). ■

*~ Lori Baker, Senior Communications Specialist*

*thank you!*  
**State Employees**  
 Public Service Recognition Week is coming, May 6-10!  
 Look for special messages of appreciation for your work throughout the week.

**WINNER, WINNER!**

**WE RECEIVED MANY** entries in response to April's **word search contest**, but there could only be one winner. Congratulations to **Dawn Maxey**, a Financial Management Systems business analyst, who was randomly selected as the winner. She received a special gift bag, including Arizona Highways magazines, a Red Rock Country puzzle, stress ball, pen and candy. ■

*Kathy Boyle, ADOT Communications*