



MEMPHIS (April 26, 2023) – The Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance held a series of news conferences today to unveil "100 Years of Road Funding," both a celebration and a history project wrapped into one.

In 1923, the 63rd General Assembly approved funding at the urging of then Governor Austin Peay. Now, 2023 marks one hundred years of Tennessee having a sustainable funding source for roads.

Drawing attention to State Route 1, the Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance is encouraging Tennesseans to Take a Drive on part of this highway which was originally known at the "Memphis to Bristol Highway" and has provided passage across Tennessee since the early 1900s.

The Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance seeks to engage the public through their sharing of oral and written stories as well as historical photos and news articles related to the building and development of our road system over the past 100 years.

Materials were distributed detailing a website platform, 100YearsofRoadFunding.com, to support citizen involvement through any of three avenues: Tell a Story, Take a Drive and Share an Image. In upcoming weeks, "100 Years of Road Funding" will visit select communities across Tennessee for citizens to share their stories and images in person. Tennesseans can celebrate our vital road system as the foundation of our economy and communities.

With the roads created in Tennessee for the past hundred years, road stories exist of both road trips and road creation.

"The end goal of this celebration is to create a treasure trove of historical stories and images, honoring the people who supported and built the roads and those who use them," said Susie Alcorn, executive director of the Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance and curator of 100 Years of Road Funding. Alcorn continued, "Through *100 Years of Road Funding*, the stories will be collected then catalogued into a showcase of what Tennessee roads have provided."

The stories and images captured will be delivered in digital format to various county historical offices and public libraries and/or to the State Library and Archives. The Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance, through 100 Years of Road Funding, will collect the personal and family tales that are possible as a direct result of Tennessee's roads created in the past hundred years.

While "100 Years of Road Funding" links to the historic passage in 1923 that created sustainable road funding for Tennessee, another historic event recently occurred with the passage of Governor Bill Lee's Transportation Modernization Act. The Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance lauds Governor Bill Lee and Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) Commissioner Butch Eley for their foresight to address the massive challenges of our current road system.

Governor Lee proposed an additional \$3.3 Billion in the 2023-24 state budget for TDOT.

"There are no free roads," said Bill Moore, chairman of Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance and former chief engineer for TDOT. "We appreciate the substantial funding commitment by Governor Lee, TDOT Commissioner Eley and the 113th General Assembly. When there are future surplus funds, we urge those be applied to the Governor's stated infrastructure priority."

The current road system was designed to serve approximately 3 million people. Tennessee's population today is more than 7 million and growing.

Tennessee's roads and bridges allow for our in-state tourism and bring in our out-of-state visitors. The Tennessee road system supports our citizens in their everyday lives as a major foundation of our livelihoods, education, recreation, healthcare and economy.

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About Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance

Since 2005, Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance has served as an umbrella organization and advocate for adequate and consistent funding for Tennessee's infrastructure needs. The key drivers of the organization are safety, mobility, economic competitiveness, and overall quality of life. Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance is the presenter of the podcast series *Highway See* (found at HighwaySee.com) on the history of Tennessee's roads and bridges. To learn more about Tennessee Infrastructure Alliance visit: <http://www.TNinfrastructure.org/>