



JULY 2026

Connecting the DOTs

86th Annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally: Friday, Aug. 7 to Sunday, Aug. 16, 2026



The 2026 Sturgis Rally graphic is on our SDDOT homepage to guide the traveling public to the **SDDOT Rally information page** at [Rally Traveler Information page](#).

Enhancing Safety:

With the increased traffic volumes during this event, SDDOT will activate temporary traffic signals and place speed limit reductions in multiple locations in advance of the official Rally kick-off.

SDDOT staff will also deploy message boards and speed trailers at various locations along with the permanent dynamic message signs (DMS) on the Interstate to display messages regarding traffic conditions, crashes causing delays, extreme weather events, and other vital messages as needed.

Sturgis Rally Traffic Counts:

The SDDOT provides daily traffic counts at nine locations for vehicles entering Sturgis. The information is released on week days during the Rally. The daily counts are also posted to the [Rally Traveler Information page](#).

After the Rally officially concludes, a complete 2026 Rally traffic count report will be made available on the SDDOT website at <https://dot.sd.gov/transportation/highways/traffic-data/>.

Thank you:

Thank you to all SDDOT employees who have spent (and will spend) countless hours preparing, working at the Rally (including the TOC), and dismantling everything when it is over. Many SDDOT staff work “behind the scenes” across the state to enhance traveler safety and monitor data during the Sturgis Rally.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Page 2	Secretary's Corner
Page 3	2026 Employee Meetings
Page 4	2026 Hall of Honor Inductees
Page 5	June Storm in Highmore
Pages 6 & 7	Fallen Hero Bridge Dedications
Page 8	Safety - New (AIC) platform
Pages 9 & 10	Mentoring Minute/Tour Photos
Page 11	AI Guidance from BIT
Page 12	Training & Development
Page 13	STIP Meetings/Picture the SDDOT/Impact Awards
Page 14	Finance Corner
Page 15	Finance - Updated Contract & Work Order Closure Process
Page 16	“Then and Now” Series
Page 17	Employee News and Updates/Retirements
Page 18	New Hires/Promotions/Lateral Position Changes/Longevity

The Secretary's Corner



Growing Leaders, Strengthening Teams

SDDOT is fortunate to have over 40 interns working within our organization this summer. I want to take time to recognize the valuable work provided by our interns and those who mentor them. Interns bring fresh perspectives, energy, and innovative ideas that can revitalize team dynamics and inspire new approaches. They provide valuable support on projects, help to lighten workloads, and improve overall productivity.

Internships also serve as an effective pipeline for identifying and training future talent, reducing longterm recruitment costs. Additionally, mentoring interns can foster leadership development for our staff, strengthening the organization's internal culture.

One of the priorities in our Strategic Plan is to **grow and retain a high-performing workforce**. Transportation is constantly evolving with new technologies, changing customer expectations, and increasingly complex challenges. To meet those demands, we need talented people who are committed to learning, adapting, and leading.

Our decisions are guided by data, informed by the voices of our customers, and strengthened by the experience and expertise of our employees. Whether we're improving safety, delivering projects more efficiently, or enhancing customer service, our staff remain at the center of every success.

The group photo is from the **SDDOT Intern Appreciation Event** held in Pierre on July 14, 2026. A special thanks to **Hannah Bolton, Pierre Region Traffic Engineer; Heidi Olson, BHRA Human Resources Manager/Business Partner; and Kim Smith, BHRA Human Resource Generalist** for spearheading this event. Hannah noted that it was a successful event due to the assistance of many! Thanks to all staff who offered classroom and hands-on training to make this a meaningful event for our interns! By investing in our workforce today, we are ensuring SDDOT remains a trusted transportation leader delivering on our mission of **Better Lives Through Better Transportation** for many years to come.



National Intern Appreciation Day is Thursday, July 30, 2026. Let's celebrate these future leaders and innovators! Please take a moment to thank our interns for their time given to the SDDOT this summer.

2026 Employee Meetings

The annual SDDOT employee meetings have been scheduled. The 2026 employee meetings will again include breakout sessions to allow employees an opportunity to discuss topics of interest to them.

As we've done in the past, a survey will be shared with staff members in advance of their meeting to garner questions/topics to be covered. Please know your questions and feedback help determine the most effective ways to interact and receive input from our 1,000 employees.

There will also be an update on topics and ideas raised during the 2025 employee meetings.

The four maintenance meetings will be held in conjunction with the Rodeo events this year.

Please "Save the Date" for your 2026 employee meeting . . .

➔ **Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2026 - In Sioux Falls**
10 - 11:30 a.m. (CT) - Aberdeen Region Maintenance

➔ **Thursday, Sept. 24, 2026 - In Sioux Falls**
1 - 2:30 p.m. (CT) - Mitchell Region Maintenance

➔ **Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2026 - In Rapid City**
10 - 11:30 a.m. (MT) - Pierre Region Maintenance

➔ **Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2026 - In Rapid City**
1 - 2:30 p.m. (MT) - Rapid City Region Maintenance

➔ **Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2026 - In Pierre (Central Office)**
Community Bible Church

9 - 10:30 a.m. (CT)

Group #1: Secretary, Training, Legal, ITS, Project Development, Planning Administration, Local Government, Environmental, Materials & Surfacing, Internal Services, Internal Audits, Finance, Aviation Services, and Air, Rail & Transit

11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. (CT) Celebrate Success Event/Lunch

2 - 3:30 p.m. (CT)

Group #2: Road Design, Right-of-Way, Transportation Inventory Management, Research, Bridge Design, Operations Administration and Operations Support

➔ **Tuesday, Dec. 15, 2026 - In Pierre**
10 - 11:30 a.m. (CT) - Mitchell and Aberdeen Region Field Engineering

➔ **Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2026 - In Pierre**
12 (Noon) -1:30 p.m. (CT) - Pierre and Rapid City Region Field Engineering

Congratulations 2026 South Dakota Transportation Hall of Honor Inductees

June Hansen and Kari Karst

The Transportation Hall of Honor recognizes individuals who have made a lasting, valuable, and/or unique contribution to South Dakota's air, highway, public transit, or rail transportation system. The Hall of Honor originated in 1972, and with the addition of Hansen and Karst, now includes 101 inductees.

Find the full press release with additional information about each Hall of Honor inductee at <https://dot.sd.gov/inside-sddot/media/press-releases/hansen-and-karst-chosen-as-2026-south-dakota-transportation-hall-of-honor-inductees/>.

June Hansen serves as the SDDOT Civil Rights Compliance Officer.



One of June's most significant contributions is her leadership in developing and fostering collaboration between the Department and tribal nations through her role as SDDOT Tribal Liaison. Under her leadership, the SDDOT has made meaningful progress in strengthening communication and building a positive, productive working relationship with tribal nations.

Save the Date: June's Hall of Honor Event is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 17, 2026, 5 p.m. at the Missouri Avenue Event Center in Pierre. For additional details, please contact Kari Kroll at 605-773-5105.

Kari Karst is the President / CEO of BX Civil & Construction, located in Dell Rapids.



Kari has demonstrated exceptional service to the construction industry through her leadership, dedication, and advocacy. Her contributions have significantly impacted the transportation industry in South Dakota as well as on a national level. Kari has served on the AGC of South Dakota Board of Directors for over 20 years. She made history in 2004 as the first female president of the AGC Highway-Heavy-Utilities Chapter.

Save the Date: Kari's Hall of Honor Event is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 1, 2026, at the Riverside Event Center in Dell Rapids. For additional details, please contact Kari Kroll at 605-773-5105.

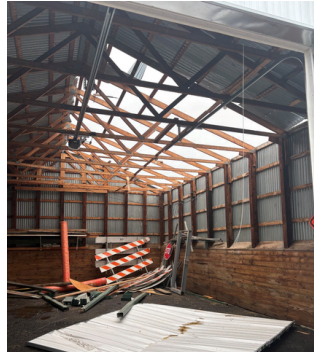
Standing Strong Together:

SDDOT and Transit Teams Support Highmore After Devastating Storm

When severe storms swept through Highmore on Monday, June 29, 2026, with winds exceeding 130 miles per hour, the damages to the community and to SDDOT facilities were significant. Yet in the midst of the destruction, the response from SDDOT employees and Public Transit staff demonstrated SDDOT values.

In the hours and days following the storm, SDDOT team members worked side-by-side with local residents and emergency responders to help the community begin the recovery process. Staff provided traffic control barricades to support multiple road closures. They focused on necessary cleanup at SDDOT buildings and the shop site (**as shown below**), along with repairing damaged signs along area highways.

The dedication of the Highmore maintenance crew, along with others who stepped in to assist, played a crucial role in coordinating efforts with community members and state officials. Their willingness to pitch in wherever needed exemplifies our mission to serve South Dakotans, especially in difficult times.



River Cities Public Transit (RCPT) also stepped forward without hesitation. The RCPT team donated time, resources, and transportation support to bolster local recovery efforts, including transporting prison inmates who assisted with cleanup throughout the week.

In a message shared by RCPT staff, they emphasized the spirit behind their support: "We are honored to play a small role in helping our neighbors during their time of need. It's about compassion over convenience, service over self, and the reminder that even after the darkest storms, hope can still be found in the kindness of others."



2026 South Dakota Fallen Heroes Bridge Dedications

In 2019, the South Dakota Departments of Veterans Affairs, Military, and Transportation, with the Governor's endorsement, launched the Fallen Heroes Bridge Dedication program. The program honors South Dakotans killed in action or remain missing in action by dedicating state bridges in their memory.

Naming bridges after our fallen heroes provides opportunities for remembrance, reflection, and respect. Each dedication serves as a lasting tribute to the men and women who gave their lives in service to our nation and to the ideals of freedom and liberty.

The Fallen Heroes Bridge Dedication Committee meets each April to select the heroes and bridges to be honored that year, with dedications held throughout the months of May through November.

To date, 72 bridges have been dedicated to honor 78 South Dakota service members.

Below are the the two 2026 dedications held to date. On the next page are upcoming dedication ceremony dates, times, and locations. More photos will be shared in future newsletters. Thank you to the staff who attend and represent SDDOT at this ceremonial events.

PFC Alvin Spider - Dedication ceremony held July 10, 2026 - Akicita Mato Gymnasium in Fort Thompson



SGT Richard Heimes - Dedication ceremony held July 11, 2026 - VFW Post 791 in Yankton



2026 South Dakota Fallen Heroes Upcoming Bridge Dedication Ceremonies:

PVT George Thares

July 31, 2026 - 1 p.m. (CT) - St. Joseph Catholic Church (518 2nd Ave. W.) in Mobridge

PFC Vern Harris

Aug. 15, 2026 - 1 p.m. (MT) - Red Earth Table (421 N. Main St.) in Isabel

CPL Lawrence Brownotter

Aug. 16, 2026 - 1 p.m. (MT) 2 p.m. (CT) - V-J Celebration Arena in Bullhead

1LT Laurence Radlinger

Aug. 17, 2026 - 2 p.m. (MT) - Minneluzahan Senior Citizen (315 N 4th St.) in Rapid City

PFC Randolph Hutchinson

Aug. 21, 2026 - 1 p.m. (MT) - Wakpala High School (12250 S.D. Highway 1806) in Wakpala

SSG Ronald McIlravy

Aug. 22, 2026 - 2 p.m. (MT) - St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church (106 S A St.) in New Underwood

Sisseton Regional Ceremony:

SP4 Gerald Aaland, S2c Laverne Nigg, SFC Ronald Reil, and SP4 Arden Renville

Oct. 14, 2026 - 5 p.m. (CT) - Tribal Administration Building (12554 BIA Highway 711) in Sisseton

Sioux Falls Regional Ceremony:

CPT Alton Henry, PFC Kirby Dougherty, PFC David Fjerstad, PFC Ruben Schoenwald, SGT Luverne Dixon, and PFC Jake DenOuden

Nov. 11, 2026 - 2 p.m. (CT) - SD Military Heritage Alliance (1600 W. Russell St.) in Sioux Falls

Find additional information about the Fallen Heroes Bridge Dedication program and ceremonies by clicking on the **South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs** logo.

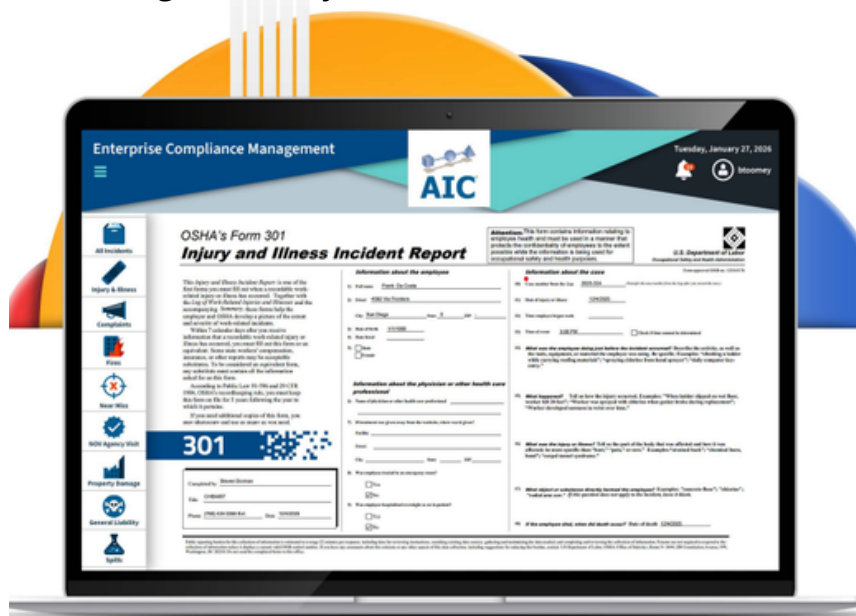


Safety Program Management Advancements:

By: Chuck Layton, Safety Manager

I wanted to share information regarding the **Applications International Corporation (AIC)** platform and its benefits for our safety program management. The AIC platform offers SDDOT a robust, centralized database at the enterprise level, designed to streamline and strengthen safety processes across the Department and will be replacing HS50, our current BIT developed workforce safety system. By integrating all safety activities into one comprehensive system, it allows for more consistent documentation, greater visibility between divisions, and quick access to both historical and real-time safety information. This system will be able to track equipment data to identify trends or information to prevent incident reoccurrence.

From incident reporting and investigations to root-cause analysis, corrective actions, and trend evaluation, AIC supports the entire lifecycle of incident management. This system empowers SDDOT to capture and analyze incident data more efficiently, enhancing our ability to monitor both leading and lagging safety indicators like the **Total Recordable Incident Rate (TRIR)**. With improved data integrity and advanced analytical capabilities, SDDOT can easily identify risk patterns, assess program effectiveness, and implement targeted safety interventions.



Ultimately, adopting the AIC platform gives SDDOT a modern and scalable safety data infrastructure. It minimizes manual processes; and equips our safety staff and leadership with actionable insights to make informed decisions, reduce workplace risks, and continuously elevate organizational safety performance.

August 2026 is the target timeframe to begin AIC installation. In preparation for the system implementation, users will be identified. Training sessions will be organized to ensure everyone is comfortable and feels knowledgeable about their role and responsibilities to fully utilize the AIC system.

Additionally, the AIC system will support smart phone capabilities, allowing users to conveniently enter incidents, near misses, and safety behavioral observations directly from their devices. This feature will make reporting and tracking much easier and more efficient for everyone involved. If you have any questions or need further clarification about AIC platform features or benefits, please let me know.

Our **Safety Values** must align with: *"Better Lives through Better Transportation"*



July Mentoring Minute:

Goals Become Growth With Meaningful Mentorship

By: Ariana Griffey & Joseph Sestak

Working toward your goals in a mentoring relationship is both an intentional practice and a shared journey. At its core, mentoring is about growth—learning from experience, gaining new perspective, and challenging yourself in ways that lead to meaningful progress. To truly benefit, it helps to approach the relationship with clarity, commitment, and openness.

A strong mentoring relationship begins with well-defined goals. By now you should have goals in mind, and you may have already accomplished some of them. Continue refining those goals and add new ones as you grow; this keeps your development moving forward. Goals don't need to be perfect or fully formed at the start; they simply need to reflect what you hope to develop, strengthen, or achieve. When you articulate your goals openly with your mentor, you create a foundation for honest conversation and focused guidance. Both of you gain clarity on where you're heading and how you can work together to get there.

Once your goals are established, the journey becomes about consistent effort. Growth doesn't happen all at once – it's built through small, steady steps and moments of reflection. In a mentoring relationship, this means being proactive: sharing updates, asking thoughtful questions, seeking feedback, and being willing to adjust when something isn't working. Your mentor is there to support you, but the momentum comes from your willingness to engage and grow.

Accountability is equally important. A mentor helps you stay aligned with your goals by offering perspective, celebrating your successes, and highlighting blind spots. Accountability isn't about pressure; it's about partnership. When you commit to your goals and allow your mentor to help you stay on track with them, you strengthen both your development and the relationship.

Finally, remember that real growth often requires honesty, vulnerability, and courage. Being open about challenges or uncertainties is not a weakness – it's an essential part of learning. When you trust your mentor enough to share what's truly holding you back, you create opportunities for deeper insight and more meaningful progress.

Working toward your goals with a mentor is an investment in yourself. It's an opportunity to stretch your abilities, broaden your perspective, and gain confidence in the direction you're heading.

With clarity, commitment, and collaboration, the mentoring relationship becomes a space where your goals turn into achievements, and your potential becomes something you can see more clearly – and build on – every day.

Mentoring Minute continued . . .

July Mentoring Minute: Photos from Mentoring Event Tours



The Rapid City Mentoring Event was held on July 15, 2026. This group photo was taken at Rinker Materials, a QUIKRETE Company, one of the largest manufacturers of concrete pipe, box culvert, precast, and related products. The group also toured the GCC Dacotah Cement Plant and the U.S. Highway 385 project.



The Pierre Mentoring Event was held on July 21, 2026. Participants visited the Pierre/Ft. Pierre Bridge to learn about key features of the completed structure. The group then toured the Euclid Avenue reconstruction project to see ongoing roadway and utility upgrades. The event wrapped up with a visit to the Pierre Region Repair Shop for an overview of daily operations.



The Sioux Falls Mentoring Event was held on July 22, 2026. Participants toured Egger Steel Co. to learn about steel fabrication operations before heading out to see progress on the Interstate 229 & Cliff Avenue and Interstate 29 & 85th Street projects. The group finished at the Ace Ready-Mix facility, where staff provided an overview of concrete production and its role in supporting local construction.

Mentoring Coming Events:

Stay tuned for Info on the September Mentoring Event

Make Time for Mentoring!

AI Usage Policy

By: Dawson Lewis, Business Intelligence Specialist

SDDOT staff members are allowed to use Copilot AI and/or Gemini AI to assist in their work. The most important thing to remember is that you do the thinking. AI assists you, but you are still the one that SDDOT relies on to use your knowledge and experience to meet our needs.

The full [State policy on Generative AI \(GenAI\)](#) can be found here. The basics to remember are:

- GenAI tools may be used to aid in tasks such as drafting documents, generating ideas, summarizing information, writing code, and conducting data analysis.
- GenAI-created content must be considered as a starting point. The content must be reviewed for accuracy, clarity, spelling, proper grammar, and contextual appropriateness before relying on it for work purposes.
- GenAI-created content is not a replacement for the user's professional judgment and creativity.

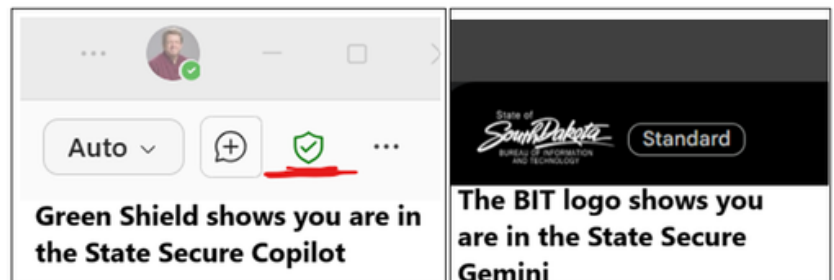
Even if using the secure versions, staff must follow all applicable agency guidelines and policies regarding the handling of sensitive or confidential data. This should not be a problem for us in SDDOT, but as a reminder this includes:

- Personally Identifiable Information (PII) such as names, dates of birth, and social security numbers;
- Protected Health Information (PHI) as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA);
- Federal Tax Information (FTI) as defined by Publication 1075 issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS);
- Criminal Justice Information (CJI) regulated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS); and
- Payment Card Information (PCI)

When using Copilot or Gemini, look for indicator that the information you enter stays within the State's domain and is not exposed to the world.

BIT provided a list of acceptable AI tools. The list is available at Service Now > Search > AI and then click the link to [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#).

Please note SDDOT has an AI work group. This team will help guide future AI application availability for our staff.



Reminder: BIT provides monthly SDDOT IT system-related updates. As available, these updates are posted on the Intranet at intranetdot.sd.gov/BIT_IT_Development_Updates.



BISON KDSR (Know, Do, Share, Report Back)

The monthly KDSR is your go-to resource to stay informed about BISON. Access it here: [June 2026 KDSR](#)
If you have questions or feedback, reach out to the BISON team at BISON@state.sd.us.

Training & Development Opportunities

Learn ~ Engage ~ Improve

Simplified coding is available for ALL training courses!

Use function 1175; no AFE needed!



- If you would like the recurring meeting added to your calendar, email DOTLMS@state.sd.us.
- If you'd like to know when a new recording is available, follow the [SDDOT It Pays to Train](#) playlist on SDLearn.

Upcoming in-person courses:

- First Aid/CPR/AED
 - Aug. 4, 2026 | 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. CDT | Pierre
- NHI 135048 Countermeasure Design for Bridge Scour and Stream Instability
 - Sept. 22-24, 2026 | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. CDT | Pierre
- NHI 130053 Bridge Inspection Refresher Course
 - Sept. 29 – Oct. 1, 2026 | 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. CDT | Sioux Falls

New Online Courses:

- Maintenance Planning and Scheduling Best Practices
- Pavement Repair Calculations and Worksite Planning

SDDOT Summer Safety Playlist

- Go Sun Smart At Work (30 minutes)
- Heat Stress (18 minutes)
- Heat Stress Safety (8 minutes)
- First Aid – Module 11 – Cold and Heat Emergencies (8 minutes)
- Spotter Safety in the Workplace (15 minutes)
- How to Use a Chainsaw Safely – Part 1 and 2 (45 minutes)

Click on the SDLearn graphic or use this link to sign in: [SDLearn](#)



Search by the **complete course name** listed.



Tentative 2027-2030 STIP Public Meetings held in July

The SDDOT offered virtual and in-person public engagement options for the Tentative 2027-2030 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). All Tentative 2027-2030 STIP information is available through the virtual meeting room on the SDDOT website at <https://dot.sd.gov/projects-studies/planning/tentative-statewide-transportation-improvement-program-stip>.

The STIP is a four-year program listing projects developed through the coordinated efforts of the SDDOT, Transportation Commission, state and federal agencies, local and tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, public agencies, transportation providers, citizens, and other interested parties. The program identifies highway and intermodal improvements to preserve, renovate, and enhance South Dakota's transportation system.

Thank you to all who participated in the STIP public meetings. Wide-spread participation is instrumental in the success of projects statewide. **Written public comment will be accepted until Friday, July 31, 2026.** The SDDOT begins the yearly update of the STIP in mid-April, however, public input is welcome year-round. **Contact: Levi Briggs, STIP Coordinator at 605-773-3590 or levi.briggs@state.sd.us**



2nd Annual "Picture the SDDOT" Photo Contest

Picture the SDDOT submission deadline is Friday, Nov. 13, 2026. The contest features photos submitted by and voted upon by SDDOT staff.

Submit photos [here](#) or scan the QR Code!

Contest information is also available on the Intranet at ["Picture the SDDOT"](#).



Impact Awards and Kudos Board

Click on the graphic to access the nomination form.

The [Impact Award Informational Flyer](#) provides more details.

Please take the time to recognize the hard work of your co-workers through an **Impact Award**. Don't forget to give them a "shout out" on the **Kudos Board** on the Intranet.

KUDOS BOARD
VIEW AND POST



**2026
IMPACT AWARDS**

Submit a nomination for a team or an individual who has gone above and beyond in demonstrating the Department's mission and vision!

Finance Corner

REMINDER

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE: VOUCHER DELETIONS/CORRECTIONS

DELETIONS:

When requesting a voucher to be deleted, please email **Brandy Hansen (1st point of contact)** or **Tracy Boom (2nd point of contact)** the following information:

- Vendor Number
- Invoice Number (not the voucher number)
- Dollar Amount of Voucher
- **Explanation of why the voucher needs to be deleted**

This information will ensure the correct voucher is deleted.

CORRECTIONS:

When requesting changes to be made on a voucher that has already been entered, please email **Brandy Hansen (1st point of contact)** or **Tracy Boom (2nd point of contact)** the following information:

- Vendor Number
- Invoice Number (not the voucher number)
- Dollar Amount of Voucher
- Detail of requested change(s)
 - *Company, Account or Center changes
 - *DOT project coding changes:
 - - Contract numbers, inventory ticket numbers, item codes, equipment number, etc.
 - - Item description changes

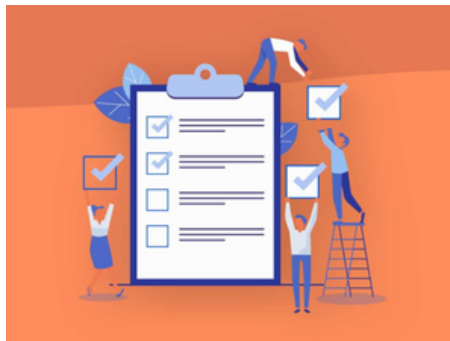
We cannot make changes to the following:

- Invoice Number
- Invoice Date
- Total Amount of Invoice

The voucher will need to be deleted and re-entered with an “X” behind the invoice number.

This information may also be found in the **DOT Accounting Procedures Manual** at:

<https://intranetdot.sd.gov/docs/fin/AccountingProceduresManual.pdf>



Updated Process: Separate Contract and Work Order Closure Forms

By: Kellie Beck, Director of Finance and Management

We've made an important update to our contract/work order closeout process to reduce confusion and improve accuracy.

After reviewing user feedback and discussing common scenarios with staff, we are moving away from the combined DOT-996 form and transitioning to two separate closure forms:

- **DOT 996A – Work Order Closure Form**
- **DOT 996B – Contract Closure Form**

This change will help eliminate the recurring question of whether a contract is being closed when a work order is submitted. Work orders and contracts serve different purposes, and having one form for both created uncertainty for staff and for audit/review workflows. Using two distinct forms ensures each type of closure is handled correctly and consistently.

Why the Change?

Work orders and contracts follow different life cycles, and closing one does not automatically close the other.

- Staff frequently encountered situations where the combined form created ambiguity.
- Separate forms make expectations clearer and reduce errors during submission.
- This update aligns our closeout process with records-retention requirements and improves audit readiness.

Reminder: Quarterly Expiration Notifications

Each quarter, you will continue receiving an automated email listing your expiring contracts and work orders.

It is critical that staff review these notices and submit the appropriate closure form promptly. Timely closure helps us:

- Comply with state and department records retention standards
- Keep our contract files clean and current
- Make it easier to find active contracts and work orders in File Director and the Negotiated Contracts system
- Reduce administrative back-and-forth during audits and renewals

Your diligence in closing items as they expire ensures smoother workflows for the Audits Office, Finance, and project teams across the DOT.

Next Steps:

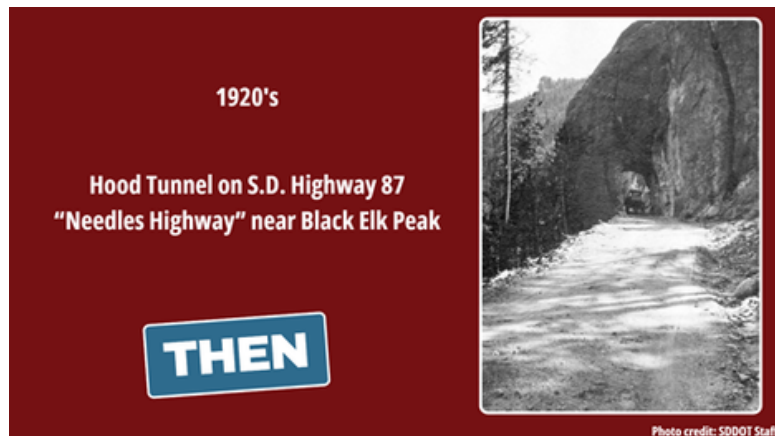
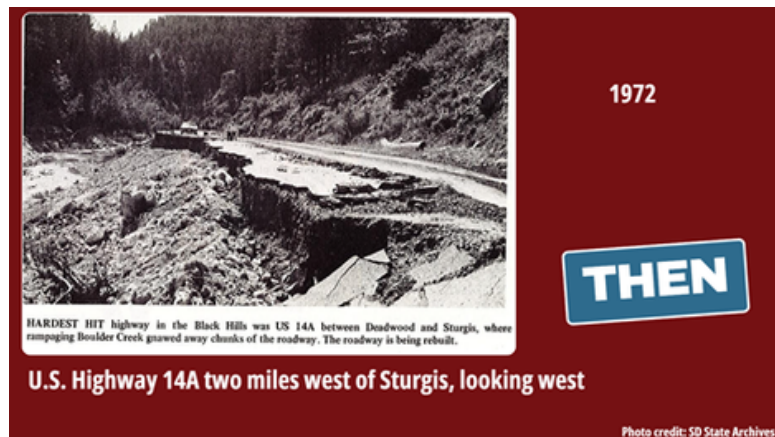
- Begin using the separate DOT 996A (Work Order) and DOT 996B (Contract) forms immediately.
- Please continue monitoring your quarterly notifications and closing items as needed.

Thank you all for your attention to this process improvement and for your continued commitment to maintaining accurate and compliant contract records.

Contribute to the "Then and Now" Series

We are seeking historical photos of SDDOT projects for our "Then and Now" series. This project highlights how SDDOT's work has evolved over time. While we have a strong foundation started, we know many of you have valuable images that help tell this story. If you have historical photos to share, we would greatly appreciate seeing them. Please include the location and an approximate date with each photo so we can accurately document and showcase the project.

Also, if you did not take the photo, let us know to whom to give credit. If you are able to get a "now" picture, that would be great, but it isn't necessary. Just as a note, your photos do not have to be extremely old. While some examples use images from the 1920s, 1930s, or 1970s, more recent "then" photos are needed also. Please email pictures to dot.communications@state.sd.us.



SDDOT Employee News and Updates



The SDDOT made a special appearance at the **City of Martin's Summerfest** in June 2026, giving attendees a fun, up-close look at the equipment that keeps South Dakota's roads safe each winter. Guests were reminded to watch for blue lights on plows and **Don't Crowd the Plow**. Pictured are the grandchildren of **Cody Allen, Lead Highway Maintenance Worker (Martin)**. Many thanks to the SDDOT maintenance team for a great opportunity to connect with the community.



Wyatt Reis (Highway Maintenance Supervisor, Winner Area) pictured on the right was elected in June for another one-year term for State Commander of the Sons of the American Legion Detachment of South Dakota.

Wyatt will lead and work alongside 2,500 members and 57 squadrons across the state to support our veterans, children, and communities.

Governor Rhoden noted at the June ceremony, "The freedoms we are blessed with today were secured by generations of Americans who answered the call to serve. I was honored to join the 107th Annual South Dakota American Legion Convention. As a veteran myself, I know that freedom isn't free. I thank all who have served and kept our nation strong, safe, and free."



Celebrating Employee Retirements

Congrats to **Dave Pennel, Custer Area Highway Maintenance Worker**, who retired in June with 20-years of service.

Congrats to **Todd Thompson, Bridge Maintenance Engineer**, retiring in July 2026.

Congrats to **Sarah Gilkerson, MPO Coordinator, Project Development Office**, retiring in July 2026.

July New Hires:

Jacob Powers, Construction Technician - Sioux Falls
Brennan Wolf, Construction Technician - Belle Fourche
Ryan Olson, Highway Maintenance Worker - Junction City
Curtis Lewandowski, Highway Maintenance Worker - Sisseton
Corey Engelstad, Highway Maintenance Worker - Plankinton
Fred Myers, Equipment Technician - Rapid City
Megan Lim, Stormwater Engineer(Environmental Engineer) - Rapid City

July Promotions/Lateral Position Updates:

Levi Balcom, Equipment Shop Foreman - Mitchell
Alyssa Sterrett, Right of Way Specialist - Pierre
Jay Tople, Geotechnical Engineer Manager - Pierre

Miles of Service - July Longevity

Dustin Witt, Highway Safety Engineer - 20 years (Central Office - Project Development)
Alan Berheim, Finals Review Transportation Specialist - 25 years (Central Office - Operation Support)
Steve Palmer, Highway Construction Project Engineer Manager - 30 years (Rapid City Area)
John Mattesen, Belle Fourche Area Engineer - 35 years (Belle Fourche Area)



Dustin Witt, Highway Safety Engineer - Office of Project Development, (right) received his **20-year** longevity pin from **Brace Prouty, Engineering Supervisor – Project Development.**



Dale Healey, Highway Safety Planning Engineer - Office of Project Development, (right) received his **20-year** longevity pin from **Brace Prouty, Engineering Supervisor – Project Development.** Dale reached his 20 years of service in May 2026.



Terri Geigle, Transportation Specialist (left),received her **10-year** longevity pin from **Jack Dokken, Air, Rail & Transit Program Manager.**



Dylan Riedl, Wildlife Biologist (right), received his **10-year** longevity pin from **Joanne Hight, Administration Program Manager.**

