

By PATRICK HALL

It's no surprise that Tennessee Department of Transportation has invested heavily over the past several years and continues to make significant investments in Wilson County.

A story on the front page of today's Wilson Post gives local residents some insight into the projects that TDOT has under construction right here at home.

By October 2013, a new bridge will be completed over the Cumberland River, connecting Wilson and Sumner Counties and by December 2013, Interstate 40 from Mt. Juliet Road to Highway 109 will be widened to eight lanes.

While on a tour Monday with TDOT officials, it was noted about 24,000 vehicles travel over the bridge between Wilson and Sumner Counties each day. They expect that daily traffic to increase to 34,000 in the next 20 years.

Also, officials said the daily traffic flow over the 8-1/4-mile area being widened on I-40 will increase to 95,000 vehicles.

The widening project on I-40 that is under construction was specifically chosen over two other potential projects to be the department's fourth design-build effort.

TDOT Commissioner John Schroer said the department, under his leadership, would strive to keep local elected officials informed and added that partnering with local communities is a top priority. The Projects Tour allowed local leaders to voice concerns and relay what our community needs to meet challenges for the future.

Wilson County is one of the fastest-growing counties in Tennessee, and TDOT is doing an

outstanding job to make sure the roads and bridges traveled by local residents are able to meet that growth.

Wilson is also fortunate to be far ahead of other counties on mass transit. Our county is the envy of other Middle Tennessee counties as we have the state's only commuter rail line, a mass transit system that has been in place for more than five years carrying local residents and those in neighboring counties to and from work places in Nashville.

In the future, TDOT has announced plans to continue widening I-40 from Hwy. 109 east to U.S. Hwy. 231, as well as widening Hwy. 109 from U.S. Hwy. 70 to the new bridge at the Sumner County line.

Once these projects are completed, the headaches and inconvenience caused by traffic congestion on these roads will hopefully be eliminated.

These improvements will encourage business and commercial growth along the Hwy. 109 corridor between I-40 and the Sumner County line and place a spotlight on this particular area of Wilson County making it "The Place to Be."

Home sales are steadily increasing, unemployment rates are among the lowest in the region, public and private schools are getting high marks and the county is maintaining its position as the second wealthiest in Tennessee.

It's no wonder then that the Tennessee Department of Transportation is seeing the need and the value of investing hundreds of millions of dollars in Wilson County.