

# INFORMATION RELEASE



## Office of the Director

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### **AHTD DIRECTOR DAN FLOWERS ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT**

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### **AHTD ENGINEER SCOTT BENNETT NAMED SUCCESSOR**

**LITTLE ROCK (6-1)** -- The Arkansas Highway Commission announced today at its regular meeting it has received notice from Dan Flowers, Director of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD), of his pending retirement from the Department effective September 21, 2011.

According to provisions of the AHTD's retirement policy, Flowers, 64, is required to retire prior to his 65th birthday, December 21, 2011. Flowers, a 43-year veteran of the Department, made the formal announcement to the Commission during its regular business meeting at the AHTD Central Office in Little Rock.

Upon a motion by Commission Chairman Madison Murphy of El Dorado, the Commission recessed into Executive Session to discuss a succession and transition plan. Upon returning to its public meeting, the Commission officially named AHTD Assistant Chief Engineer for Planning Scott Bennett, 45, to succeed Flowers as Director. The Commission also announced that Deputy Director and Chief Engineer, Frank Vozel, 62, would continue in his current position. Bennett will serve as Acting Director from late August when Flowers takes accrued leave time, until September 22, when he will assume the full title of Director.

"The Commission greatly appreciates Dan's extraordinary contributions over the past 43 years," Chairman Murphy said, "not only to this Department, but to the State of Arkansas, our region, and the national transportation industry." Flowers has served as Director of the AHTD since 1994, longer than anyone in the Department's history. He is presently the longest serving CEO of any state transportation agency in the country. "This type of long-term leadership is one of the main reasons the AHTD consistently ranks among the top five most efficient state transportation agencies in the country – our administrative costs per mile are currently second-lowest nationally," Murphy said.

Flowers worked four summers at the Department while in college, and began full-time employment after graduating from the University of Arkansas with a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering in 1969. He started as Planning Engineer in the

Department's Planning & Research Division, and worked in eight other engineering and management positions within the Department prior to becoming Director in 1994.

Flowers is a Registered Professional Engineer and served four years on the Arkansas Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, including one term as President. He is a member of the University of Arkansas' Academy of Civil Engineering and served as President of the Academy for the 2010-2011 term. He also serves on the Mack-Blackwell Transportation Center's Professional Advisory Board at the U. of A., and holds a position on the Engineering Department's Civil Engineering Strategic Advisory Council. He received the Distinguished Engineering Alumni Award from the University's College of Engineering in 2005, and the "Dan Flowers Education and Training Facility" at the College of Engineering was named in his honor in 2004.

In August of 2001, the Arkansas Chapter of the Associated General Contractors (AGC) presented Flowers with its most prestigious award, the Skill, Integrity, and Responsibility (SIR) Award for his leadership contributions to the construction industry. In 2006, he received the Jack Evans Regional Leadership Award from the Metroplan Board of Directors, and he was inducted into the Arkansas Construction Hall of Fame in 2010.

Nationally, Flowers is a past president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and served two terms as President of the Southeastern Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (SASHTO). He is the recipient of two of AASHTO's most prestigious awards – the Thomas H. McDonald Award in 2004, which recognizes exceptional contributions to the science of engineering, and the George S. Bartlett Award in 2008, which is presented jointly by AASHTO, the Transportation Research Board, and the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to highway progress. He currently serves on the Second Strategic Highway Research Program's (SHRP2) Oversight Committee and is Co-Chair of the AASHTO/AGC/ARTBA Joint Committee.

"Dan's resume and list of accolades is well-deserved and is the most impressive I have seen in the transportation industry. But we knew Dan's retirement was getting closer, and we are extremely pleased to be able to elevate Scott Bennett to the position of Director," Murphy stated.

"It is no accident that the Commission was able to move this swiftly in naming a new Director," Murphy continued. "This Department does an excellent job at recruiting, training, and maintaining quality personnel. Consequently, we have a very strong management team in place. Not only will we have Scott as our new Director, but we will continue to have Frank Vozel and his 40+ years of experience as our Deputy Director & Chief Engineer, and other senior staff with significant experience. We have a very professional staff, and the Commission expects this to be a seamless transition."

Bennett, like Flowers, began working summers for the Department while pursuing his civil engineering degree from the University of Arkansas. He received his Bachelors Degree and went to work for the Department full-time in 1989. He received a Masters Degree in Civil Engineering in 1994 through the AHTD's Transportation Research Assistantship Program, and he was named the University's Mack-Blackwell Transportation Center Student of the Year in 1995.

He was named the University of Arkansas' Young Engineer Alumni of the Year in 2005, and was inducted into the Arkansas Academy of Civil Engineering in 2010.

Bennett has held numerous management positions at the AHTD, including Assistant Division Head and Division Head of two separate divisions – Planning & Research, and Programs & Contracts. He was named to his current position, Assistant Chief Engineer for Planning, in 2004. He is also very active at the national level, serving on several AASHTO committees, including the Transportation Futures Policy Committee and the Reauthorization Steering Committee.

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