

Smell that? That's the hot asphalt of Nail Road's extension in DeSoto County.

By [Aarron Fleming](#), Daily Memphian

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The Nail Road extension ribbon-cutting ceremony took place June 4. (Wes Hale/Special to The Daily Memphian)

Thursday was a good day to be a DeSoto Countian.

The smell of hot asphalt wafted in the air. An American flag stood upright in the bed of a county road-department pickup truck.

County officials formally opened the recently completed extension of Nail Road in Olive Branch, elongating the stretch of blacktop around 2 miles to connect with Center Hill Road to the east.

“It’s a great day to be a DeSoto Countian. Progress means more roads to support our growing infrastructure,” County Supervisor Mark Gardner said in remarks to the small crowd that gathered in the middle of the road at 5 p.m. Thursday evening.

Gardner joked he would do a couple of doughnuts to test out the road when the ceremony was finished.

Despite extending the road a relatively short distance, the project has been in the works for around 10 years, said County Supervisor Jessie Medlin, who also spoke Thursday. It was aimed at relieving traffic off Goodman Road, the major thoroughfare that runs east to west across the county.

“Of course, that road’s been there for years. The reason I wanted to do this was to get local traffic out there and leave those trucks on Goodman (Road),” Medlin said in comments to The Daily Memphian, noting tractor trailers are often using Goodman Road to get to nearby U.S. Route 78 and Interstate 69.

Medlin said trucks would not be allowed on the new road extension to keep it exclusive to local vehicle traffic.



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The last extension to Nail Road was completed in 2021 and connected Hacks Cross Road to Polk Lane. Both projects were aimed at easing Goodman Road traffic. Medlin said the last project costed around \$4 million. The newest costed around \$8 million.

“You funded this road,” Medlin said, addressing county taxpayers. “We just try to use your money as wisely as we can.

“Take care of it. Keep it clean.”

The cutting of the sparkly red ribbon Thursday also paved the way for future improvements and economic development in the eastern part of the county.

Medlin said there are plans to eventually widen the road to five lanes at some sections, three at others. It will also connect to a nearby subdivision currently being built.

“We’ll pave the rest when it comes time,” Medlin said.



Aarron Fleming

Once an intern, he never left, joining the staff full-time in 2022 as an education reporter. He moved to public safety in 2023, where he covered some of the city’s biggest court cases, including the criminal trials for those charged in the deaths of Tyré Nichols and rapper Young Dolph. He also chronicled the Shelby County Jail and the deaths that have occurred at the facility.

He now provides suburban coverage, focusing on DeSoto County and the surrounding municipalities.