MEDIA RELEASE

OFFICE OF COUNTY MAYOR GLENN JACOBS

400 Main Street, Suite 615, Knoxville, TN 37902

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 8, 2020

Contact: Mike Donila 306-1177 cell
Abbey Harris 215-4579 office 705-1681 cell

Knox County EPW to Close 60-Year-Old Bridge for Repairs

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.— The Knox County Engineering & Public Works Department will close the Yarnell Road bridge in the Northwest part of the county beginning Friday, July 10, in order to begin repairs that could take up to six months.

The almost 60-year-old bridge, which spans 27 feet over Hickory Road, sits just east of Everett Road.

The Tennessee Department of Transportation inspects and evaluates all Knox County bridges every two years and recently downgraded Yarnell Road from "fair" to "critical." Bridges are classified as good, fair, poor, serious or critical. State officials said the settlement in the bridge deck—built in 1966—indicates that the supporting beam has begun to lose structural integrity.

"The type of beam used in this bridge is common for bridges built at this time and this one deteriorated very quickly," said Engineering and Public Works Director Jim Snowden. "It isn't used anymore because it is very problematic for failure."

The Engineering Department put aside $500,000 in the current FY21 budget for bridge repair. The project will cost about $250,000.

The county set up an easy detour that routes motorists from Buttermilk Road to Marietta Church Road.

"We don't anticipate a lot of inconvenience by this closure and detour as the traffic volume on the road over the bridge is only about 2,000 cars per day," Snowden said.

The repairs entail removing the bridge deck and structural beams before a new beam structure is placed and a new deck poured.

"The Engineering team working on this bridge is incredibly knowledgeable and capable," said Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs. "I know they will work as efficiently as they can to ensure that this bridge is safe for traffic as quickly as possible."

###