

# Mebane City Beat: Prolonging town's infrastructure

BY KELLY HUNTER  
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS OF ORANGE

When you travel to a new city or town, what is one of the first things you notice? Is it the number of parks or restaurants or the layout of the streets? In today's day and age, one of the most essential aspects for economic growth and development within a municipality is the community's infrastructure. The construction of roads, bridges, highways, and railways enables people to transport goods and services while providing access to work, schools, and recreational activities. A city's infrastructure is vital to a community's success and overall well-being. Suppose a municipality does not take care of its streets. In that case, citizens are unhappy because the facilitation of goods and services slows down, and your community becomes remembered for its ragged roadways instead of beautiful shops, hospitality, and charm.

The City of Mebane understands how crucial it is to take care of our streets for residents and non-residents who visit our positively charming community. Because of this, the Public Works Department has a maintenance crew that goes around on a weekly basis and observes city streets. The city also retains an independent engineering firm, LaBella Associates, PC, from Charlotte, North Carolina, to conduct a pavement condition survey every four to five years. A pavement condition survey is the process of collecting data to determine the structural integrity, distresses, skid resistance, and overall riding quality of the pavement. During an assessment, the consultant rides all city-maintained streets and visually observes eight types of pavement distresses, including the severity of each distress noted.

The eight distress types are alligator cracking, block cracking, reflective cracking, rutting, raveling, bleeding, ride quality, and patching. The severity of each distress is recorded as none, light, moderate or severe. The field data is then entered into software that computes a Pavement Condition Rating (PCR). The PCR deducts values based on the type of distress and severity. If

no distresses are observed, then the PCR is 100. The rating scale is between 0 and 100. Below is a table of PCR and the condition type of the street:

Rating	Condition
91-100	Very Good
81-90	Good
66-80	Fair
51-65	Poor
0-50	Very Poor

After LaBella Associates performs a visual observation, they generate several reports, including but not limited to an alphabetical street listing, PCR street listing, and recommended activities. Mebane's Engineering Department then uses the report to generate the annual street resurfacing and repair list by riding and evaluating the streets with the lowest PCR value identified in the report. "City staff utilize the pavement condition survey to provide an equitable and unbiased approach to selecting which streets receive maintenance activity. Of course, this approach must factor in available funds, but the pavement condition rating speaks for itself. The survey also works as a financial tool to aid in identifying city streets that can receive lower-cost maintenance activities, such as crack sealing, that will prolong the need for an expensive milling and asphalt overlay operation and help to stretch funds to perform more maintenance activities," stated Public Works Director Chuck Smith. The last pavement condition survey by LaBella Associates was recorded in fiscal year 2019-2020, and the city expects a new report to be completed this year in mid-April.

The city uses three main methods of street maintenance to preserve and extend the pavement life of our roadways. The first method is patching, which consists of removing 2" to 6" of existing pavement. The amount of pavement removed during patching depends on the severity of the distress and condition



Figure 1: Final Product - Crack Sealed Roadway



Figure 2: Typical Milled out Roadway



Figure 3: Final Product - Resurfaced Roadway



Figure 4: Severe Alligator Cracking/Rutting

of the existing subgrade. The subgrade is the foundation material underneath a constructed road or pavement that provides support. New asphalt is then placed in layers and compacted to replace the removed asphalt or stone base.

A second method utilized for maintaining Mebane's roads is crack sealing. Crack sealing involves placing an adhesive sealant into existing cracks on the pavement surface. This method is used to prevent water intrusion into the pavement/subgrade, preventing more severe pavement distress in the future. Crack sealing involves using a high-pressure nozzle to remove any debris in the cracks before filling them with a hot liquid asphalt mixture. The material used hardens within minutes, depending on the temperature outside, and allows traffic to resume on those roads/streets immediately after.

The third method often used in street repairs is milling and resurfacing. Milling is often the first step in preparing an existing asphalt surface for renovation or resurfacing, as it removes



Figure 5: Transverse/Block Cracking

the top layer of worn-out or damaged asphalt. This method is primarily used to grind up 1.5" to 2" of existing asphalt to provide a smoother transition from existing pavement to new pavement. The ground-up milling particles are transported to a nearby asphalt plant and recycled. Milling is typically done on curb and gutter streets to maintain adequate drainage.

After the milling stage comes resurfacing, a simple maintenance technique

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# Panthers' baseball winning streak snapped

ADAM POWELL

STAFF REPORTER/NEWS OF ORANGE

Orange High's varsity baseball team continued its push for another Central Conference regular season title this spring by recently putting together a seven-game winning streak. And while the Panthers' streak was snapped April 12 in a heartbreaking 5-4 setback to league rival Williams, Jason Knapp's squad is still in prime position to challenge for another conference crown.

Coming off their 6-1 home victory on April 5 over crosstown rival Cedar Ridge, the Panthers increased their winning streak to six games with a 4-0 shutout victory over Williams in Hillsborough on the evening of Tuesday, April 9. The Panthers set the tone with two runs in the bottom of the first inning, and then added insurance runs in the third and sixth innings.

Meanwhile, senior pitching standout Cross Clayton threw one of the best games of his high school career, as the veteran Panther went the distance, allowing just three hits and one walk with seven strikeouts over seven innings. Facing only 26 batters the entire game and facing minimal trouble, Clayton cruised the Panthers to the shutout win.

Senior Ryan Honeycutt also had a huge game for Orange, as he belted a home run and a double, finishing with three RBIs. Clayton also helped himself on the mound by driving in a run.

The Panthers stepped out of conference play on Wednesday, April 10 to win their sixth straight contest, as five different pitchers hurled OHS to a convincing 10-1 win at home over Wake Forest's Heritage High School.

Orange settled the issue quickly against the visiting Huskies, as the home team scored twice in the bottom of the first and five more times in the bottom of the second for a commanding 7-0 lead. Although Heritage broke the shutout with a run at the top of the fourth, the Panthers added more runs in the fourth, fifth, and sixth innings on the way to a nine-run victory.

Honeycutt and fellow senior Ryan Horton joined freshman Oliver Van Tiem each drove in two runs, while senior Cameron Guentensberger, junior Garrett Sawyer, and freshman Kayden Bradsher also drove in runs. Sawyer, Horton, Bradsher, Van Tiem, and senior Elijah Santos all had two hits in the victory, while Bradsher had an RBI double.

Five OHS pitchers - Sawyer, Van Tiem, seniors Wyatt and Coltin Hedrick, and sophomore Ryan Sawyer combined to allow just six hits and one earned run with eight walks and eight strikeouts over seven innings. The Panthers played flawlessly in the field behind their staff, committing no errors against the Huskies.

Unfortunately for the Panthers, their good fortune came to an end on Friday night as they traveled to Burlington for a rematch with Williams.

After both teams scored three runs in the first inning, the Bulldogs plated a run in the bottom of the sixth to take a 4-3 lead into the seventh. And while the Panthers rallied to tie and extend the game, the Bulldogs came up with a huge defensive play in the top of the seventh, which kept the score tied. Williams walked off in the bottom of the seventh on a bases-loaded walk for a dramatic 5-4 victory, which snapped Orange's win streak and dropped the Panthers to 4-2 in Central Conference play.

Wyatt Hedrick drove in two runs for Orange in the disappointing loss, while Honeycutt and Van Tiem also



PHOTO COURTESY ORANGE BASEBALL

**Orange High senior pitching standout Cross Clayton pitched one of the best games of his prep career on April 9 in a Central Conference win over Williams. Clayton shut out the Bulldogs on just three hits, allowing just one walk with seven strikeouts over seven innings as the Panthers won 4-0.**

drove in runs. Senior Josiah Gibbs pitched a solid five innings, allowing three runs - one earned - on 10 hits with no walks and four strikeouts. Coltin Hedrick came on in the sixth and allowed two earned runs on three hits with four walks and two strikeouts.

Through six conference games, the Panthers stood tied for second place in the Central Conference standings with a 4-2 record. OHS trails first place Southern Alamance, who got off to a 6-2 start in league play in their first year as a Central Conference member. This week the Panthers have two games scheduled with Person County, as the Panthers and Rockets settle second place for the time being in the league standings. On Wednesday, Orange will host Voyager Academy in a non-conference matchup in Hillsborough.

Cedar Ridge had the unenviable task last week of taking on Southern Alamance, the current Central Conference frontrunner, in a pair of contests April 9 and April 12 in Swepsonville and Hillsborough. Both games went Southern Alamance's way, as the Patriots picked up an 11-1 home win over April 9 before traveling to Cedar Ridge on Friday evening and earning a 7-3 triumph over the Red Wolves. The losses dropped the Red Wolves to 6-8 overall and 3-5 in conference play.

This week the Red Wolves have two games scheduled with Eastern Alamance on Tuesday and Friday, sandwiched around a non-conference game on Wednesday at home against Chapel Hill.

Eastern Alamance found a brief resurgence in early April, as the Eagles won three straight games over Clover Garden, R.J. Reynolds, and Western Alamance. Last Tuesday, the Eagles hosted rival Western Alamance and came away with an impressive 8-1 triumph over the Warriors. Unfortunately for EAHS, however, the Eagles

suffered a heartbreaking 14-13 setback at East Chapel Hill on April 10 before falling 12-6 in a rematch against Western Alamance in Elon on Friday night.

In the opener of the series against Western Alamance, sophomore John Wittig had a double and drove in three runs, while freshman Braxton Ballard drove in two runs. Sophomore Kasen McGinnis also drove in a run as the Eagles broke out offensively. On the mound, sophomore Jarrett Newell had a solid outing with only three hits and one walk allowed over six innings with eight strikeouts and one earned run. Fellow tenth grader Zack Merchel came on and closed the door in the seventh, allowing no hits with a strikeout.

The game last Wednesday at East Chapel Hill was a wild affair, as Eastern Alamance first took a 3-1 lead in the top of the third, and then added four more runs for a commanding 7-1 lead heading into the bottom of the fourth. But East Chapel Hill rallied for six runs in the bottom of the fourth, tying the score. The Wildcats then added another run in the fifth, taking an 8-7 lead.

Eastern was on the brink in the top of the seventh, trailing by a run. But the Eagles put together one of their best innings of the season, scoring six times to take a dramatic 13-8 lead. It appeared that the Eagles were on their way to their fourth straight win, but the Wildcats stunned the visitors from Mebane with their own six-run inning, which resulted in a stunning 14-13 walk-off win.

Newell crushed a three-run homer in the loss for Eastern Alamance, while Merchel had two hits, drove in four runs and scored an additional run. Wittig also drove in three runs with two doubles for the Eagles in defeat. Four EAHS pitchers - Wittig, McGinnis, sophomore Christian Vieau and fellow tenth grader James Wellons - combined to allow 12 hits and seven earned runs with 14 walks and eight strikeouts.

Eastern Alamance returns to action with two games this week Tuesday and Friday against Cedar Ridge, as well as a home non-conference showdown Wednesday with Greensboro Grimsley.

Although Southeast Alamance has struggled in its first season out of the gate, getting off to an 0-11 start in Mid-Carolina Conference play this spring, the Stallions pulled off the biggest upset of their brief history on April 10, as they hosted Central Conference leader Southern Alamance.

The 2A Stallions did what numerous 3A teams are having trouble doing against the Patriots - score runs while holding them from scoring. After setting the tone in the top of the first - pulling a dramatic double play to get out of the inning - the Stallions went to work, with Ayden Brown driving in a run in the bottom of the first for a 1-0 lead.

The Stallions continued adding to their lead, as freshman Paxton Piccini thrashed a two-run double as the home team streaked to four runs for a 5-0 advantage over the stunned Patriots. Aidan Amick and Jake Rasko followed with RBI hits in the bottom of the third as the Stallions built their lead up to 8-0. Although Southern Alamance broke the shutout in the top of the third on a double off the bat of Eli Holland, the Patriots were humbled by their smaller, younger local rival. It was easily the biggest stunner in local baseball circles this season so far.

This week Southeast Alamance travels to Burlington to face Williams on Wednesday night, followed by a doubleheader on Friday against Mid-Carolina Conference foe Graham.

## MEBANE CITY BEAT

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involving a new material layer being laid over an existing surface instead of replacing the entire road. Resurfacing roads is cheaper and faster than replacing an entire street and requires milling an existing pavement and installing 1.5" to 2" of a surface course or the final layer of the road. Asphalt is delivered to the City of Mebane streets in trucks for resurfacing, and contractors use a paving machine to place the asphalt. A steel wheel roller then compacts the asphalt and provides a smooth surface. When roads are resurfaced, contractors are required to maintain traffic, meaning they can only pave one lane at a time. Traffic is diverted onto the road's other side, leaving one lane open. Residents may experience a delay in their driveway if the pavement has yet to be rolled. After

the pavement is placed, a testing firm performs a density test to determine the new pavement's density for compliance with city and NCDOT (North Carolina Department of Transportation) requirements. When you resurface a street, existing utilities such as maintenance holes and water or gas valves may need to be adjusted to the proposed elevation of the new asphalt pavement.

Knowing what type of maintenance activity is needed depends on the kind of distress. Alligator cracking, typically called fatigue cracking, appears as a series of interconnecting cracks caused by surface fatigue failure. Fatigue failure is most often the result of repeated traffic, and maintenance usually requires patching, or, depending on the quantity of alligator cracking and other distresses, the street may be resurfaced. Maintenance activity for block and reflective cracking is typically crack sealing. Block cracking refers to roughly

square or rectangular cracks that carve up your pavement, while reflective cracking occurs due to breaks or cracks in underlying layers because of movement at the original crack. Recommended maintenance activity for rutting, a permanent deformation in an asphalt pavement's layers or subgrade caused by the passage of traffic, is patching and/or resurfacing, depending on the severity.

Maintenance for raveling or the disintegration of the top layer of your asphalt is typically resurfacing. Maintenance activity for bleeding, a reported condition of distressed asphalt that includes a film of bituminous material on the pavement surface creating a shiny, glass-like, reflecting surface that usually becomes quite sticky, is usually resurfacing and may require a mat coat (crushed stone placed over bleeding areas) before resurfacing.

When fixing the streets of the City of Mebane, we make sure all asphalt

pavements are NCDOT-approved mixes. This means all resurfacing materials are bituminous concrete surface courses (asphalt pavement), and patching materials are either base courses or intermediate courses. For crack sealing repairs, the crack sealant material is a hot-applied joint sealer and complies with NCDOT requirements. LaBella Associates, PC, and the Mebane Public Works Street Maintenance crews work hard to ensure our city streets remain in good condition and will last for years to come. As Mebane continues to grow, your assistance in maintaining our infrastructure is vital to the success of our roadways. If you notice any streets needing repairs or would like to request to have a road looked at, please call the Public Works Department at 919-563-3401 or report a street repair via the citizen portal link found on the City of Mebane website.

Kelly Hunter is the communication specialist for the City of Mebane.

## APRIL IS PREVENT CHILD ABUSE MONTH

Join the Hillsborough Exchange Club in supporting our Exchange Club Family Center in two events - April 18, Antonia's restaurant in Hillsborough will donate a percentage of all sales. On April 20, Ride Out Child Abuse will feature a motorcycle ride (at noon) and a festival in the afternoon. The Location is Rack and Roll, off exit 145 in Burlington.

As part of a national network of prevention centers sponsored by local Exchange Clubs, Our Exchange Family Center, located in Graham, has supported hundreds of families and children with a variety of programs and services - parenting classes, in-home education, community resources, personalized trauma interventions. Center staff accepts referrals from a 7 county area, including Orange and Alamance. Our staff are on call for emergency response and leading group presentations and classes. Sadly we have seen an increase in need especially since Covid.

The Hillsborough Exchange Club works with the Orange County Sheriff's office to provide supplies needed in a crisis for family and domestic situations as well as certification training for their crisis intervention team.

Be a part of the solution to help stop Child Abuse and Neglect. <https://exchangeclub.com/>

