ITS Heartland Chapter

ITS PULSE

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What's Inside

President's Message

by Willy Sorenson

My fellow ITS friends, it is now my turn at the helm of ITS Heartland and I could not feel prouder about such an organization. I would like to thank my predecessor, Mr. Jim McGee, for his work during the past year as President and for turning things over to me in great condition.

ITS Heartland's main focus has been, and will continue to be, putting together the best educational, informative, and exciting conference we can each year. The next conference in Omaha in 2007 will not deviate from this goal. Our mid-year board meeting on September 26th will be the starting point for speaker and topic planning. Hotel arrangements at the Embassy Suits at the Old Market in Omaha have already been made.

The second focus I have for ITS Heartland is to 'reach-out' to the universities within our five state chapter and get engineering students excited and involved with ITS as much as possible. Our past attendance of students to the annual conference has been low and limited to students in the state where the conference is located. Is this because spring break is at the same time? Is it a cost factor; or lack of awareness of ITS Heartland? Whatever the reason, I would like ITS Heartland to embrace this challenge and reach-out to interested students.

The ITS Heartland Board of Directors will be enlarged by two members to bring in more ITS professionals interested in ITS Heartland. The Board voted to separate the duties of Secretary/ Treasurer into two positions. They also voted to add another Director from the Vendor community. Both changes will be filled during the membership voting during the conference in Omaha next spring.

As always, I'm open for your suggestions on how to make ITS Heartland even better. Ideas for the annual conference or areas of focus will always be discussed and considered at our monthly conference call Board meetings. Feel free to call or e-mail me anytime. I look forward to this year's activities and am honored to lead the ITS Heartland State Chapter.

Thanks..... Willy

FREE MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

If you are a member of ITS Heartland and have a Web site, please contact Dennis Kroeger (kroeger@iastate.edu) to create a link to your Web site from the ITS Heartland Web site. Just send him your URL.

Find us on the Web:

www.itsa.org
www.itsheartland.org

Mark your calendar...

ITS Heartland 2007 Annual Meeting
April 10-11, 2007
Omaha, Nebraska

Past President's Message

by Jim McGee

Did you know that ITS Heartland always has three annual meetings on the burner? As each annual meeting is wrapped-up, plans have already been started for the two succeeding annual meetings. As I write this, contracts have been signed for Omaha and Springfield, and the Wichita contract will be completed once the Omaha meeting is closed out. ITS Heartland is always looking toward the future.

The ITS Heartland Annual Meeting is our principal deliverable to our membership. Each meeting is a $30,000 event and requires substantial planning to make it a success. Our efforts to attract national-level speakers and panelists have become a year-round task and we strive to have relevant panels that address the important issues that ITS practitioners must deal with on a day-to-day basis. We also make every effort to attract and retain ITS vendors and consultants whose products and services are critical to the success of ITS in our five-state region.

Looking ahead just a few months, our 2007 Annual Meeting will be held in Omaha at the Old Market Embassy Suites Hotel, a lovely venue that is certain to provide the ambiance critical to a great annual meeting. The Old Market area is one of the loveliest in the U.S. Nearby places of interest include the Omaha airport (3 miles), River Star excursion boat (2 miles), Union Station/Western Heritage Museum (.5 mile), Omaha Zoo and Rosenblatt Stadium (2 miles.) Just a short ride away, the NDOR District 2 operations center will provide us with an opportunity for a technical tour. The Omaha facility will be operational in late 2006; and your Nebraska colleagues are anxious to have you visit it.

Most of you know that our annual meeting cycle is perpetual and rotates among our members states.

2008: Springfield, Missouri
2009: Wichita
2010: Back in Iowa

Great meetings don't happen by accident; you have your ITSH board members to thank for our successes. Each meeting requires a lot of effort by many people and it has become a year-round responsibility in order to provide the level of service that ITSH has become known to have. Looking around the U.S., I'm convinced that our five-state region has developed the best model for others to follow. The value of regionalism is hard to dispute. The value of our three-year planning cycle has been proven to work well.

April 10-11, 2007 are key dates for your calendar and I hope that we'll see all of you in Omaha. On April 12, we'll begin serious plans for Springfield. Success doesn't rest.

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For information about ITS Pulse or to recommend articles for future ITS Pulse editions, please contact your state representative.

ITS Pulse Contributors

Thank you to the vendors and sponsors who supplied articles and photos for this edition.

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ITS Peer-to-Peer Program Leverages ITS Expertise

Intelligent Transportation Systems expertise from a public sector ITS practitioner can be acquired easier and at less cost than you might believe. The ITS Peer-to-Peer Program is a technical assistance program that provides public sector stakeholders with a convenient way to tap into the growing and constantly evolving ITS knowledge base.

More than 120 ITS professionals support the P2P Program. Most are public sector professionals who have been active in the planning, design, procurement, and implementation of Intelligent Transportation Systems across the U.S. ITS Peers bring valuable experience in the deployment of ITS. The ITS P2P Program supports the FHWA Resource Centers, FTA Regional staff, and FMCSA staff.

The Peer-to-Peer Program usually covers all costs associated with Peer visits within program and funding guidelines and limitations. The Program covers travel, accommodations, meals, incidental expenses, and similar costs associated with on-site and off-site assistance. No more than two individuals are typically supported for any eligible event. Peer requestors may be asked to assist in securing accommodations, waive conference fees, and similar assistance.

The ITS Peer-to-Peer Program updates its list of Peers in order to be able to address new technical areas and issues. Nominations are accepted on an ongoing basis. P2P Program staff will assist with developing an approach to provide assistance. The Peer-to-Peer Program has supported expert panelists at the ITS Heartland Annual Meeting and other key venues and limits funding support to two ITS experts per single event.

The Peer-to-Peer Program can be contacted by phone or e-mail: 888-700-PEER or p2p@volpe.dot.gov

Submitted by Jim McGee

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Improving Transportation for Large Scale Events within the State of Iowa

The Iowa Department of Transportation has initiated a project to support local agencies in providing safe and efficient travel to and from the largest traffic events held on an annual basis within the state. These include Iowa State University and University of Iowa football games, the Iowa State Fair, high school state wrestling and basketball tournaments, and large events held at the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines.

This study provides insight into the planning and staffing for these events, the vehicle and pedestrian field observations per event, and identifies the short and long term improvement strategies developed for each venue. Traffic and pedestrian data at these events are being collected over a two-year period. The results are being used to promote the management of operational information as an asset in accommodating customer peak demands on the transportation system.

For more information contact Willy Sorenson at the Iowa DOT, Willy.Sorenson@dot.iowa.gov

ITS Heartland 2006 Annual Meeting Report

The ITS Heartland Seventh Annual Meeting was highlighted by speeches by FHWA's Mike Freitas, AASHTO's Valerie Briggs and ITSA's Pat McGowan. Three general sessions and 11 breakout sessions were attended by more than 250 attendees at the Marriott Hotel in downtown Des Moines. Twenty three vendors displayed and demonstrated their wares in the exhibition hall. Attendees were also invited to see the new Des Moines TMC and the ongoing construction of I-235.

Jim McGee

President Jim McGee called the meeting to order, followed by Sandra Larson of the Iowa DOT who welcomed the attendees to Iowa. The first general session included Brett Voorhees of the Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management who explained the crucial role that transportation plays in emergency preparedness.

The annual meeting featured breakout sessions that highlighted the various ITS activities in each of the member states. Activities ranging from work zone initiatives to operations and maintenance to weather to AMBER Alerts were presented and discussed with the attendees.

The luncheon speakers featured FHWA's Mike Freitas who, as always, brought his enthusiasm and expressed optimism about ITS as he outlined the US DOT's priorities and directions for the future. AASHTO's Valerie Briggs spoke on the importance ITS can play with AASHTO's priorities. Pat McGowan then spoke about ITS America's national perspective and the importance that the local chapters have on ITS America.

Clockwise, starting from top right: Valerie Briggs, AASHTO; Mike Freitas; Brett Vorhees, Iowa HSEM; and Dr. Libby Jones, UNL Mid-America Transportation Center

Along with the presentations the election of board members was held. The 2006 -2007 ITS Heartland

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3rd National 511 Conference Held in San Diego

In celebration of achieving five full years since the first system was deployed, the 511 National Coalition sponsored a substantive and successful Third National 511 Conference. The conference, using the theme "511...Where Travel Starts," was held July 17-19, 2006, in San Diego, California.

More than 230 public and private sector transportation specialists attended, with representatives from 35 states, the District of Columbia, Canada, Finland, Germany, and the United Kingdom. The conference hosted more than 50 speakers and panelists who spoke on a range of topics related to 511 systems, such as marketing and outreach, 511 costs, 511 content, web-based information, public-private partnerships, business models and plans, evaluating systems, leveraging 511 investments, customer research, and interoperability. AASHTO, U.S. DOT, APTA, and ITS America co-sponsored the conference.

The Opening Session provided attendees an opportunity to hear from a distinguished panel of transportation and ITS professionals dedicated to the success of 511 as a value-added nationwide service for travelers. Providing insights and praise for 511 systems deployed, as well as hopes and encouragement for systems yet to come were Gary Gallegos, San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG); Hamed Benouar of ITS California; Jim

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Multiple ITS/ATIS Efforts Progress in Kansas

ITS in Kansas City and Wichita

One of the largest ITS efforts in Kansas is the Kansas City Scout traffic management system, jointly operated by KDOT and MoDOT. In addition to enhancements being planned for the existing system, KDOT is currently working on expanding Scout coverage to include I-635 (installation of Dynamic Message Signs (DMS), cameras, and vehicle detection) and adding cameras to expand coverage on I-435, K-10, I-35, and US-69. Both of these efforts are currently in the design phase.

Several ITS initiatives are under way in Wichita, the largest urban area in Kansas. Currently an AVL system for efficient dispatch of city and county law enforcement, EMS, and fire personnel is being deployed. Future plans include a coordinated traffic signal system, and an advanced transportation management system.

Rural ITS Expands

KDOT is also planning rural deployments of DMS statewide. Although the majority of the DMS deployments will be concentrated along I-70 and I-135, deployment of DMS is planned in each of the six KDOT districts. To support this effort, KDOT will expand its fiber coverage along the western part of I-70 and is upgrading its 800 MHz radio system. KDOT is also participating in the Clarus initiative and the Maintenance Decision Support Systems (MDSS) pooled fund study.

Improvements in 511

Currently, Kansas 511 provides route-specific road condition, construction/detour and weather information for the Kansas State Highway System. Callers may interact with the system by either voice or keypad commands.

System enhancements in the works include voice upgrades; a dynamic landmark database that will establish landmark references (versus mile markers) for every mile of the State Highway System; full automation of construction/detour information and AMBER Alert information; and the addition of metro content for the greater Kansas City metropolitan area.

KDOT's goal is to provide information for the greater Kansas City metropolitan area on Kansas 511, with seamless interoperability between Kansas and Missouri. KDOT has been working to provide this coverage through coordination with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the Kansas City Mid America Regional Council (MARC). Initial planning has begun to provide not only expanded regional coverage, but enhanced content such as travel times and metro transit information.

Wi-Fi on the Horizon

KDOT will soon launch a one-year pilot with Coach Connect from Austin, TX, to provide WiFi connectivity at four Kansas rest area locations. Upon successful completion of the pilot, future plans call for providing WiFi at all 42 rest areas across Kansas at no cost to KDOT.

This project will provide generic Internet access for a fee, but travelers will have free access to a Kansas traveler information portal that will also include traveler information in neighboring states. Free Internet connectivity will also be available for highway safety personnel. KDOT will also provide appropriate road signage and assist with program promotion.

ATIS Study/Strategic Plan Under Way

KDOT kicked off an Advanced Traveler Information System (ATIS) study in July that will result in an ATIS Strategic Plan for Kansas. Scheduled for completion in 2007, the purpose of the plan is to recommend strategies and direction for future development of an ATIS in Kansas that is cost-effective and that will improve traveler access to consistent, accurate and timely information.

ATIS Strategies for the Study/Strategic Plan will focus on the potential for increased safety, transportation system efficiency and customer service, and reduced stress for travelers.

Integrated Corridor Management Iniative Application

NDOR and IaDOT Apply

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) and Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) in partnership with Metro Area Transit (MAT) in Nebraska and the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA), consultant support from URS Corporation, and university support from the Center for Transportation Research and Education (CTRE) - Iowa State University and Mid-America Transportation Center (MATC) - University of Nebraska, Lincoln along with support from other local stakeholders are proposing a demonstration of Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) on Interstate 80 (I-80) through the Omaha, Nebraska - Council Bluff, Iowa metropolitan area.

I-80 at I-480 Interchange

General Corridor Description

The applicant corridor for I-80 through the Omaha-Council Bluffs metropolitan area has been defined as the corridor from the junction with Interstate 680 (I 680) in Omaha, Nebraska to the junction with Interstate 29 (I 29) South in Council Bluffs, Iowa. The I-80 corridor, approximately 13 miles long, is within the boundaries of the cities of Omaha and Council Bluffs.

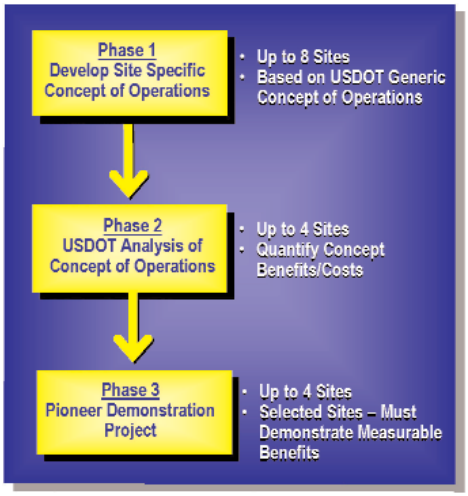
In addition to I-80, the study area, shown in the attached figure, includes the surrounding arterial roadway network, which supports the applicant corridor by providing access to I-80 and offering alternate routes when there are incidents on the freeway. To a lesser extent, the surrounding multi use trail network provides travel options for non-motorized trips within the local I 80 travelshed.

I-80 Candidate Corridor: Omaha-Council Bluffs

ICM Initiative Program Objectives

The program has been divided into three stages:

- Stage 1: The Recipient will develop its own site-specific Concept of Operations (COO) and requirements for its site-specific integrated corridor management (ICM) system.
- Stage 2: In Stage 2, the U.S. DOT will analyze the ICM systems proposed by the Pioneer Sites to determine the expected benefits derived from implementing the ICM systems.
- Stage 3: In Stage 3, selected Recipients will be funded to conduct an ICM demonstration project. The U.S. DOT will select Stage 3 sites based on the ability of sites to demonstrate and measure the benefits of the proposed integrated corridor management system.



MoDOT Moves Ahead with More ITS in St. Louis and Kansas City

St. Louis Expands with Gateway Guide:

MoDOT's Gateway Guide program will expand its coverage by leaps and bounds by the end of 2006. There are multiple projects under way to add additional cameras, sensors, more fiber optics and message boards on several corridors in the St. Louis metro area. Some of the new routes that will have coverage include the entire I-270 loop, I-70, Rte. 61/67 (Lindbergh Blvd.), Rte. 364 (Page Ave.), and Rte. 141.

By the end of 2006:

- Additional 72 cameras. Total: 92 cameras.
- Additional 30 dynamic message boards. Total: 49 dynamic message boards.
- Additional 70 miles of coverage by speed sensors. Total coverage: approximately 128 centerline miles.
- Lane use control signals on the I-255, I-270, I-64/40 and Rte. 364 river bridges will come online.
- A new and improved www.gatewayguide.com web site will come online and will offer users access to more cameras, message boards, and speed sensors.
- MoDOT will begin utilizing an integrated Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS) in its Transportation Management Center (TMC) to operate and manage the sensors, cameras, and message signs.

New Horizons for Kansas City Scout:

MoDOT and KDOT are looking beyond the norm and setting new horizons for their bi-state Kansas City traffic management system - Kansas City Scout. The states have green-lighted enhancement projects for the 90+ mile system set to be in place by the end of this year.

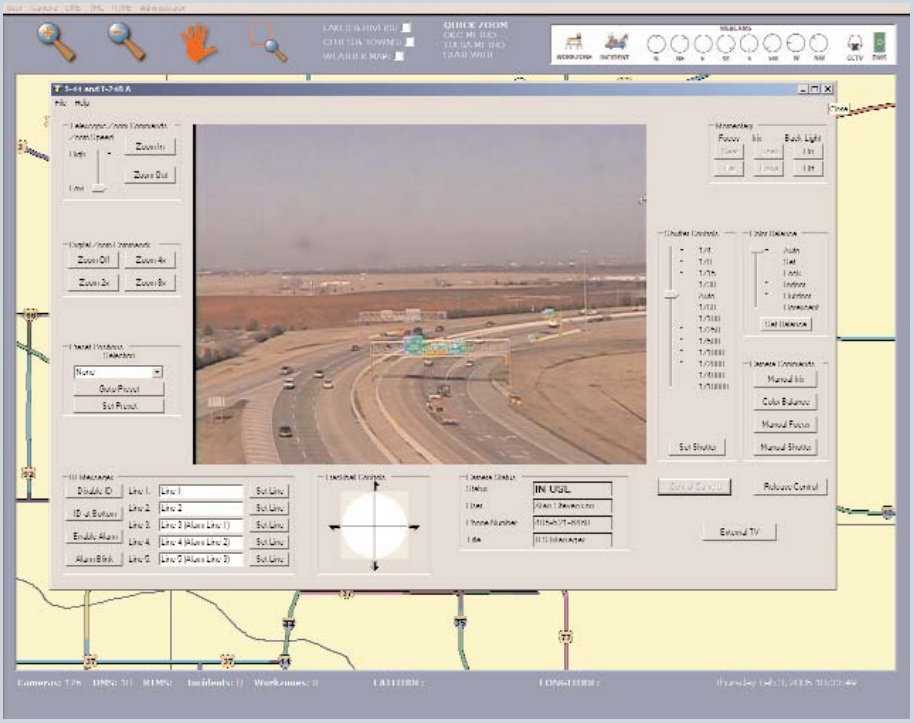
Among those enhancements is a regional alerts system that will allow subscribers to receive personal traffic, weather, and AMBER (child abduction) alerts from the Scout system's web site. If you want to know where the unexpected congestion or the planned freeway lane closures are in the Kansas City region, you'll soon be able to sign up for your free, custom alerts on the Scout web site: www.kcscout.net.

Scout is also working to bring its Kansas City commuters travel times this Fall. Staff is laying the groundwork now so later this year you'll know how long it will take you to get from Point A to Point B in current traffic conditions. If your routine drive typically takes 20 minutes and Scout's travel times says your destination is a 25 minute drive, you'll know you're going to be delayed five minutes and can adjust your plans as necessary.

Scout's Information Technology specialists are also working round-the-clock to boost bandwidth to the Scout web site. The additional bandwidth will resolve access issues when droves of Internet users flock to the site during severe weather and unusual freeway shutdowns, for example, when demand for Scout's real-time traffic data and images is at its peak.

Scout staff is relishing in the new opportunities it's facing implementing these enhancements in 2006. Two national public outreach awards this Spring and three various technology and public outreach awards in 2005 at the state, regional, and national levels are spurring staff to continue to provide a quality traffic management system that meets the needs of Scout's traveling public.

Oklahoma ITS are "OK"



The Statewide ITS deployments in Oklahoma are still doing "OK". During 2006, ODOT has been deploying fiber optic systems, CCTV and web cameras in the Oklahoma City (OKC) and Tulsa Metros. We have now integrated the Mobility Technologies vehicle detector speed data in the OKC region into the ATIS website and the State's ITS Console. ODOT is working on also installing vehicle detectors in the Tulsa metro. The ATIS public website has not been released, but is ready for public consumption. In 2007, ODOT will be focused on installing additional DMS's in the OKC and Tulsa.

Other new developments in the ITS console software is integrating new features, like teleconferencing between ITS consoles, integrating weather radar and storm data on top of the ITS console screen, and developing travel time algorithms to display on the DMS. We are also working on an application for viewing DMS messages and statuses, and speed data information to hand held devices.

Submitted by Alan Stevenson, ODOT

511 Conference, continued from page 4

Wright, National Coalition Chairperson, on behalf of John Njord of Utah DOT and Chairperson of the 511 National Policy Committee; Lou Sanders of APTA; Neil Shuster of ITS America; Regina McElroy of the U.S. DOT FHWA; and Melanie Crotty of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC).

Summing up the conference was a Visionary 511 Luncheon where attendees received feedback from a survey of conference participants regarding several issues facing 511, travel information and the 511 Deployment Coalition beyond the conference. Questions were posed to a panel consisting of leaders of the National 511 Working Group about the future of 511 and what the service will look like in 2010 and beyond. The discussion centered on new and emerging technologies and how deployers will use them, as well as generated healthy debate regarding different visions of where 511 may be headed nationally.

More conference information, including downloads for conference presentations, is available at www.deploy511.org/NationalConferenceJuly2006.htm.

ITS Heartland member states Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska have deployed 511 systems, with Nebraska's 511 system being the first statewide system deployed in the U.S. Representatives from these states also attended the conference.

Submitted by Barb Blue, KDOT, Kansas Director

Nebraska Helps Celebrate Anniversary of Interstate

It has been fifty years since the legislation passed to create the 46,508 mile stretch of interstate that spans the U.S. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) presented the Innovation Mobility Showcase to celebrate the 50th anniversary of interstate on June 22, 2006, in Omaha, Nebraska, at the Qwest Center.

MATC interns, graduate students, and faculty, and Daimler Chrysler engineers and interns pose in front of the Firestone 50th Anniversary celebration semi-trailer.

The Mid-America Transportation Center, (MATC) which is located at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), was the local agency that helped coordinate the Innovation Mobility Showcase with AASHTO and ITS America. Dr. Libby Jones, an Associate Professor at UNL took the lead on event coordination. Joining MATC faculty, staff, and students in assisting with the event were staff from the Metropolitan Area Planning Agency (MAPA); Nebraska Department of Roads; Iowa Department of Transportation; the City of Omaha; Olsson Associates; Felsberg, Holt & Ullevig (FHU); Iteris; HDR; HWS; Kirkham Michael; and The Schemmer Associates.

The Innovation Mobility Showcase was part of the AASHTO convoy that helped show where transportation is going by demonstrating the latest development in intelligent transportation systems. The national convoy retraced, in reverse, the route of the 1919 First Transcontinental Motor Train, 3,250 miles from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco.

Several members of the general public and professional transportation community were in attendance. In the Showcase, the MATC Mobile ITS Data Collection Van was on display and the Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) had the 511 Traveler Information System exhibit to educate the public. NDOR personnel included: Jaimie Huber, Carol Zimmerman, and Laura Perkins. Other sponsors of the Innovative Mobility Showcase included: The America Association of General Contractors, Triple A, Werner Enterprises, ITS America, Econolight, Connexis, Raytheon, Mark IV, TechnoCom, Shel Leader, and other local organizations.

Daimler Chrysler had two of its latest Research & Technology Center projects on display at the showcase. The first was a GPS oriented system that would communicate verbally and graphically to the driver when it was entering a construction zone (car console pictured below). The second product was a red traffic light warning system that would calculate the speed of the car in relation to the location of the stoplight and

Pictured above is the view of the screen inside of the console of the Mercedes Benz Test Car, which gave the driver their location in the construction zone. The car would also speak to the driver and let them know that they were entering a construction zone, so the driver could adjust to the speed.

MATC Staff, Valerie Lefler, discusses with two gentlemen the functions and capabilities of the mobile ITS Lab and the purpose of the research.

alert the driver if they were going too fast approaching the light so that the driver could adjust speed and not run the red light.

Michael Maile, Daimler Chrysler Engineer, stated that this software would be capable of expanding its capabilities to warn of potential accidents ahead, other road conditions, and multi-vehicle communication, where other cars on the road would communicate with each other regarding the road conditions, e.g., a patch of ice on the highway.

This technology could lead to major breakthroughs in driver safety. While these new vehicle features are quickly being developed in the auto industry, it has not yet been proven that the technology will improve safety and mobility. Extensive testing on the car software must be done, as well as the roadway technology infrastructure must be developed, tested, and implemented before we will start seeing this sold to the general public. The U.S. Department of Transportation is expected to decide in 2008 whether to dedicate further resources to develop the infrastructure. For more information on the 50th Anniversary of the Interstate and the Innovation Mobility Showcase go to www.interstate50th.org/.

Annual Meeting Report, continued from page 4

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