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News of the ITS Heartland

SUMMER 2012

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"ITS Heartland: More Than An Annual Meeting"

By Barb Blue, ITS Heartland President



Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your President this year. I am pleased with the progress ITS Heartland has made over the past several years and I'm excited about what lies ahead for us in the coming year.

The 13th Annual Meeting held in Kansas City, MO in March was a great success! Thank you to our wonderful Missouri hosts and I commend Jason Sims and the 2011-12 ITS Heartland Board members for a great job of planning the meeting. Thanks to everyone who attended (290 participants, 31 vendors, 4 Platinum sponsors and 12 Gold sponsors) - your participation made the meeting the great success it was.

"ITS Heartland: More Than an Annual Meeting" was the unofficial theme of the meeting. I would like to carry out that theme as a chapter slogan as we move forward this year. While the Annual Meeting is certainly a highlight of activity where the rich, working relationships and partnerships in the region are evident, the greatest strength of our Heartland Chapter is the ongoing activities and increasing opportunities throughout the region for each state to share ideas and best practices, coordinate resources, develop critical relationships and advance technology use to increase safety and relieve congestion across the region. The ITS Heartland Operations Working Group's efforts during last year's extensive flooding is a great example of our membership working together to get increased operational results from ITS infrastructure and partners working together to provide timely, accurate and coordinated information to the traveling public. The incident management and operational symposiums held at the annual meeting were very successful and further solidified relationships between the ITS and Emergency Management professionals not only in the region but also with

national leaders who commended our efforts in offering the joint symposiums. Our student outreach efforts are intended to attract young professionals to ITS and the important work we do for the traveling public.

While unfortunately I was unable to represent ITS Heartland at the recent ITS America Annual Meeting in Ft. Washington, Maryland, Heartland was represented at the State Chapter meeting by Jason Sims, past President, and Tim Simodynes, Iowa State Director. This is yet another example of partnerships at work.

Stan Young and Anuj Sharma are leading planning efforts to offer a US DOT ITS training workshop for the Heartland Region. A full day workshop, "Introduction to Integrated Corridor Management (ICM) Deployment" is being planned for August 22 in Kansas City, MO. **Watch for more information and I hope you will plan to attend.**

Planning has already begun for the next ITS Heartland annual meeting which will be held March 25-27, 2013 at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Topeka, Kansas. The Ice Breaker for the meeting will be held at The Great Overland Station, a preserved Union Pacific railroad passenger station that has been transformed into a railroad heritage museum. So save these dates and join us for what promises to be another great meeting!

Co-location of WICHway and 911 a Good Partnership

Submitted by: Tom Hein, KDOT Wichita Metro Public Affairs Manager/WICHway Manager



"I was inspired as to how the citizens do pay attention to the message boards and how effective they are. I call it a 'ground air traffic control position.' It is just really neat to see how when you put a message board up 'left lane closed' you can immediately see that traffic moving to the right. It's kind of like you have that power in your hands - just at the touch of a keyboard - to control traffic."

(Sedgwick County 911) Dispatch 2 Vanessa D.

Co-location of the Wichita Traffic Management Center (TMC) has proven to be advantageous to both the Kansas Department of Transportation and Sedgwick County Emergency Communications. KDOT contracts with the County to staff the TMC console (including hiring, training and supervising chores) and 911 operators use the ITS information to help their operations dispatching emergency responders for Wichita, the County and a number of

smaller communities in the metropolitan area.

"Being able to view accidents and how it's affecting traffic helps us to determine the best route for units to take in order to access accidents."

Dispatch Trainee Ashley F.

Completed in late 2011, Phase 1 of the Wichita ITS deployment included 28 cameras, 21 dynamic message signs (at 14 locations) and 36 traffic sensors. Dispatchers in the TMC have embraced their ability to affect an emergency scene by not only calling out appropriate equipment and personnel but also helping the drivers who are encounter non-recurring congestion events.

"A couple weeks ago we had an accident on U.S. 54. We were able to see the accident and we were also able to quickly post messages to direct traffic to avoid the area - and it worked. We physically could see it."

1st Shift Corporal Mitch G.

An increase in teamwork is also a result.

"It's nice for when we have media broadcasts, we can put it on signs. It is also good that they (the ITS operator) can monitor our calls because the other day I was working north side and I had an accident and they immediately posted on the sign. I didn't even have to say anything."

Dispatch Trainee Aaron M.

That feeling of teamwork extends into the field as dispatchers can now help with scene safety.

"When we have an accident there is one officer who arrives on the scene and the traffic is nipping them right in the butt. But once you put those DMS signs up, you can immediately see the results. You can immediately see how the traffic will move away from them."

Dispatch 2 Vanessa D.

The information gathered at the TMC also helps dispatchers do their most fundamental work - alerting the proper responders to the proper emergency location.

"We have a lot of geographically challenged people, so we will get multiple callers and they will give us both directions because of being unsure, and this helps narrow it down. The other day we had two accidents in the same general area. At first people were assuming it was the same accident but it turned out that it was two accidents. By being able to see that they were not the same accident, we got help to the second accident."

Dispatch 2 Stephanie R.

KDOT's contract with Sedgwick County includes a TMC console operator Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. until 7 p.m., plus coverage during

emergency situations. Because the TMC computer monitors and the projection wall are in the same room, dispatchers have access to the information and ITS tools 24/7.

"We have had several major accidents where we posted signs on the weekends when it's not manned, and that helped with traffic flow on the interstates - which ensures the safety of the officers."

1st Shift Lieutenant Barb D.

Another part of Wichita's Phase 1 was a website to share information with the public. Hosted on KDOT servers and created using a consultant and many KDOT internal, non-ITS partners, www.WICHway.org was launched in December 2011. The website provides snapshot views of cameras, traffic speeds and DMS messages. "Almost streaming" video (updating every two seconds) is available through a contract arrangement at www.TrafficLand.com. Enhancements are in the works with a Request for Proposals (RFP) coming in late summer then a new and improved website in the spring of 2013 that will offer additional traveler information features.

"I definitely like that WICHway website."

Dispatch 1 Mike C.

Customer service is important to the dispatchers - service to emergency responders, to 911 callers and to the public on the state highways covered by WICHway.

"Being able to give people advance notice is definitely a very people friendly tool to have. And it's interesting looking at the monitors. I wish we had more."

Call Taker Kim D.

Future development of ITS in Wichita will be incremental but steady. A recent bid opening for Phase 2a includes seven cameras and seven traffic sensors on a piece of freeway with over 65,000 vehicles per day. Plans are also underway on Phase 2b which will fill some of the gaps on other high-traffic freeways not covered in the initial deployment. Contractor bids will be solicited in late 2012.

"Our partnership between KDOT and 911 has been a solid one from the beginning. With the KDOT staff housed on site, we are able to address any situations immediately and openly. We value our partnership and look forward to many years of service to KDOT and the citizens driving our Wichita/Sedgwick County highways."

911 Director Randy B.

Co-location of the Wichita TMC on the 911 floor has been a great partnership and has worked well for KDOT, Sedgwick County 911 and the customers both agencies serve. And how do the 911 dispatchers feel about having ITS in their domain?

"They should always be in the same room."

Kansas State ITS Update

Submitted by: Tom Hein, KDOT Wichita Metro Public Affairs Manager/WICHway Manager



- WICHway hosted an open house for Wichita ITS project partners on June 11. Over 100 people visited with staff and toured the TMC. WICHway partners include KDOT, FHWA, City of Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas Highway Patrol, Kansas Turnpike Authority, Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and a number of consulting firms.
- KDOT continues to expand the KC Scout system and has let two projects this spring and plans to let a third project later this year. This will add radar detection, cameras and DMS on I-35, I-70 and I-435 and will help to meet the real-time rules requirements.
- A seven camera (plus traffic sensors) addition in Wichita has been let and another phase is being designed to fill gaps in the initial deployment.
- Several small projects are planned in Topeka and central Kansas that will add DMS to will improve dissemination of traveler information statewide.
- Selection of projects for the Kansas ITS Set-Aside Fund for FY 2014 was held in April. The selection committee awarded \$3,966,731 to local government partners and KDOT's ITS projects across the state. Twenty-six applications were received and 14 projects received funding.
- The current statewide Kansas 511 phone system is being upgraded and will be deployed by October 2012. New content will include metro traffic information for Kansas City and Wichita, National Weather Service severe weather watches and warnings and Rest Area locations/information. New features will include: Call transfers (to transit, commercial vehicle permitting, the Kansas tourism agency and other states); personalized information (by subscription); help for callers in identifying desired road segments to select; and improved Alert/Floodgate interface that will provide expanded operator options for providing user-friendly information on the system.

Missouri State ITS Update

Submitted By: Adam Humphrey, P.E. MoDOT Traffic Operations Engineer



Statewide Rural:

- Current Statewide Rural ITS Device Summary - 66 DMS, 72 CCTV, 28 Wireless Hot Spots
- Work is now in progress to fill-in some gaps along I-70 with new CCTV cameras to increase our coverage area in Warren and Montgomery counties - northeast Missouri.
- MoDOT is working towards implementing new enhancements in the Traveler Information System, including the implementation of mobile cell phone applications for customer travel information
- Our statewide engineering staff is evaluating some options for utilizing Bluetooth technology or other innovative solutions for the purpose of monitoring live travel conditions within MoDOT work zones, and to establish new performance measures for work zone traffic control.
- MoDOT is exploring the potential for using 3rd party traffic data to provide travel times along rural interstates and other major roads across the state.
- Our department will be hosting a statewide operations summit with FHWA on September 25-26 in St. Louis to bring in partners in highway operations to discuss best practices and opportunities for improvement. This summit will employ a peer-to-peer format with interaction between multiple agencies including DOT, counties, MPO's, law enforcement, EMS, towing, trucking, planners, etc.

Ozarks Traffic TMC:

- Our TMC has expanded the CCTV coverage area for our southwest Missouri region up to a total of 73 CCTV cameras - including devices in Springfield and Joplin.
- We are now utilizing 12 arterial DMS boards and 4 interstate/freeway DMS boards to provide real time travel information to local customers in the Springfield region.
- MoDOT and the City of Springfield kicked-off a partnership project this summer to select and purchase new signal controller hardware and software for more than 260 signalized intersections in the Springfield region.
- The OzarksTraffic TMC is currently investigating the implementation of some new Bluetooth technology to collect live arterial travel times and vehicle speeds within the Springfield metro area.

St. Louis - Gateway Guide TMC:

- Current regional ITS deployment summary - 300 CCTV's, 123 dynamic message signs (DMS), and 404 vehicle detectors
- The St. Louis TMC is currently using a central signal system to operate more than 900 signals throughout the region.
- Gateway Guide has recently completed an upgrade to a new

Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) for the operation of our regional ITS devices.

- The Gateway Green Light project is now in progress in an effort to develop a regional integrated corridor management plan in St. Charles County. This project is a partnership involving 9 different jurisdictions, which own and operate more than 330 traffic signals within the project area. The goal of Gateway Green Light is to reduce travel times/delays by creating a seamless multi-jurisdictional traffic network for managing freeway, interstate, and arterial travel.

NDOR ITS Updates:

Submitted by:

Sarah Tracy, P.E., PTOE Nebraska Department of Roads | Operations Division - ITS Section



- NDOR ITS Activities include the following:
- Starting work on an ITS strategic plan.
- Nearing completion on a statewide architecture update and DMS message set guidelines.
- Ongoing systems engineering documentation.
- Upgrading ATMS to allow other governmental agencies to view NDOR devices and potentially integrate their devices into the software.
- Developing design plans for I-80 rest area information kiosks.
- Replacing 10 DMS in the Omaha metro area this Fall.
- Starting a freeway service patrol study to develop recommendations for the future.
- Ongoing TIM training statewide.
- NDOR Traffic Forum to be held on July 27th :
<http://www.dor.state.ne.us/traffic-forum/index.htm>

BTOP Fiber Optic Expansion Project

Submitted by: Alan Stevenson, PE ITS and Fiber Optic Engr Mngr



Construction of the 1050 miles of fiber started in March 2012.

792 miles of construction contracts have been awarded. 21 different construction contracts.

258 miles of IRU partnerships will complete the total mileage. As of end of June, 505 miles of conduit have been installed and 165 miles of fiber.

Telecommunication equipment has been ordered. Expected to be complete with installation and networks up by February 2013.

Metro Projects in Oklahoma City and Tulsa
Additional DMS signs being installed.
Arterial Side-Mount Dynamic Message Signs.

OKTraffic.org has been converted to BING Platform.

Iowa DOT ITS Update

Submitted by: Tim Simodynes, PE ITS Engineer, Iowa DOT



Traveler Information

Iowa travelers can now get personalized "My Reports" alerts via email and/or text message. Alerts keep travelers informed about traffic incidents, road closures and other restrictions that affect the highway routes users have preselected. Visit www.iowadot.gov/511/MyReportsAlerts.html for additional information and simple, step-by-step instructions for subscribing.

Iowa's Statewide Operations Center in Ames began using TransSuite in May to control all the Dynamic Message Signs in the State.

Bluetooth

Iowa's first use of Bluetooth travel time detection is operating in conjunction with an Interstate bridge project near Iowa City.

Upcoming outside opportunities in Iowa

- Bridge Clearance Advance Detection and Warning system. Consultant RFP in July 2012.
- Statewide ITS Maintenance Contract. RFP expected in July-Aug 2012.
- Overhead Dynamic Message Signs. Specs to be released July 2012 for up to 3-year contract with initial bid on 8 signs.
- Side-Mount Dynamic Message Signs. Specs expected Aug 2012

- for up to 3-year contract with initial bid on 4 signs.
- Arterial / Smaller Side-Mount Dynamic Message Signs. Specs expected Sept 2012 for up to 3-year contract with initial bid on 5 signs.
- On-Call ITS Consulting Services. RFP expected in Sept-Oct 2012.
- Fiber Optic installation contracts to be let Fall 2012.

About Us

The [ITS Heartland Chapter](#) of [ITS America](#) is intended to facilitate information sharing for ITS projects and activities and to showcase ITS applications in five heartland states, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Oklahoma. To date, all five State Departments of Transportation, along with major universities in each state and the Federal Highway Administration have been involved in developing the organization.

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