Our conference was held this year at the Richmond Marriott Hotel on May 16 & 17 with more than 200 in attendance. President Cathy McGhee opened the event on Thursday morning with the announcement of the Student Paper Contest winners. We then proceeded with our Keynote Speaker, David Tyeryar, Deputy Secretary of Transportation. The crowd then gathered for our first Plenary Session, “MAP 21 & Project Performance Measures.” The overall goal of the MAP-21 program is the transition of the highway program to a performance and outcome-based program.

Our lunch speaker was Lon Anderson, Director of Public and Government Relations for AAA Mid-Atlantic. After lunch, a plenary session was held on “Technologies & Trends in ITS,” and then we concluded Thursday’s program with a “Local Government Roundtable,” focused on ITS related projects on the local level, and examples of how a locality goes about procuring and deploying ITS devices.

Opening day concluded with the ITSVA Annual Business Meeting where the results of officer and director elections were announced. Afterwards attendees were given an opportunity to spend time with each of the 21 conference exhibitors at a cocktail reception in the main exhibit hall.

On Friday morning, the agenda featured concurrent sessions on “Connected Vehicle Activities” and “Sustainable Transportation,” followed by “ITS Infrastructure Utilities” and “Transit.”

The conference concluded with a “State Agency Roundtable” featuring VDOT, DMV and DRPT speakers, who provided an update on current and upcoming projects throughout the Commonwealth.

Thank you to all the exhibitors, sponsors and attendees for making this year’s conference a huge success! 

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upcoming | calendar of events

ITE 2013 Annual Meeting and Exhibit
August 4 - 7, 2013
Boston, Massachusetts

10th Annual ITS Pennsylvania
Annual Conference
August 12-13, 2013
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

20th ITS World Congress
October 14-18, 2013
Tokyo, Japan

Have News for the ITSVA Newsletter?
Send your news and announcements along with any photos to Jonathan Williams at jonathan.williams@easterassociates.com.
Global Automakers: Urge FCC to Conduct Thorough Testing of Spectrum Sharing

Washington, DC - Allowing unlicensed Wi-Fi devices to share spectrum with connected vehicles must not be permitted without thorough testing, said automakers today in with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers and The Association of Global Automakers submitted joint comments in response to an FCC proposal to allow unlicensed wireless devices to operate in the 5.9 GHz frequency band that has been designated for exclusive use for “time-critical” Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) and Vehicle-to-Infrastructure (V2I) communications.

“V2V safety technologies have the potential to significantly reduce automobile crash fatalities and injuries on our highways," said Mike Stanton, Global Automakers' president and CEO. "There is no room for error in vehicle safety and we want the FCC to do its homework to ensure there is no risk involved with spectrum sharing."

Automakers are concerned that opening up the 5.9 GHz frequency band to other wireless uses could cause harmful interference and affect the integrity of these safety critical communications among cars, trucks, other road users and road equipment such as traffic lights. Communications delays of even thousandths of a single second matter when dealing with auto and highway safety.

“Automakers support the need to explore spectrum sharing,” said Alliance President and CEO Mitch Bainwol. "However we must understand that the future of auto safety lies in crash avoidance. In fact, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has said it believes connected vehicle technology could potentially address approximately 80 percent of crash scenarios involving non-impaired drivers.

"But these critical safety systems require that communications go through every time without delay. That’s why automakers have concerns with the 5.9 GHz frequency band becoming congested,” added Bainwol.

Automakers, government agencies and others have already spent hundreds of millions of dollars in the research, development and testing of connected vehicle technologies. Currently, ten major automakers and numerous technology providers have been working with the Department of Transportation’s (DOT) Connected Vehicle Research Program in a pilot study of V2V performance in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Nearly 3,000 cars, trucks, and transit buses are testing V2V and V2I technologies. The data from the pilot study will be used by the DOT for future potential regulatory decisions regarding communications systems for crash avoidance.

Both associations and their members have committed to working with the FCC and other stakeholders to address these concerns.

Governor McDonnell Launches I-66 Connected-Vehicle Project

Governor Bob McDonnell launches a research project with the University of Virginia and Virginia Tech to improve driving safety.

The project will use a section of Interstate 66 in Fairfax County as a test bed for connected vehicle and connected-infrastructure technology.

The four-square-mile test bed is located on I-66 between the Capital Beltway (Interstate 495) and Nutley Street, and on parallel U.S. 50 and U.S. 29.

The test-bed area has 43 locations equipped with wireless infrastructure units and two additional mobile wireless units to collect data.

Twelve research vehicles will collect information, such as acceleration, braking, curve handling and emissions; four of the 12 are the only connected motorcycles in existence.

The connected-vehicle test fleet also includes a bus and a semi-truck to test public transportation and freight applications.

Speaking about the announcement, Gov. McDonnell remarked, “This test bed will allow Virginia researchers to develop a range of applications that will result in faster infrastructure repair and maintenance, better emergency-response times and incident and congestion management. Most importantly, this research seeks to save drivers in Virginia both time and money by offering technological solutions for a safer driving experience and improved travel times on those unavoidable workday commutes. I applaud this creative partnership between two of our excellent universities and the public sector. It goes to show that by working together and harnessing emerging technology we can improve the lives of Virginians.”

Go to this website (http://www.cvi-utc.org) to learn more about the Virginia Connected Vehicle Test Bed or the current connected-vehicle research that the Connected Vehicle/Infrastructure University Transportation Center (CVI-UTC) is conducting.
The move toward self-driving cars is picking up speed quickly enough that federal safety officials are telling states not to license such cars except for testing, and say that companies making them will have to be especially vigilant and uniform in such testing.

"We want to stay ahead on this issue," said David Friedman, deputy administrator at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, which Thursday announced a policy, a research plan and guidelines "for states, and for the industry, on how to move ahead on their testing programs."

It was a rare move by NHTSA, which is in charge of overall auto safety but doesn’t like to take steps that might appear to cross swords with states over jurisdiction. The NHTSA statement says that "America is at a historic turning point for automotive travel" and cited the "enormous safety potential" of heavily automated cars. It announced a four-year study of automated vehicle systems to prepare for regulation and to make recommendations for state laws.

"NHTSA is right telling states to slow down, think this through and don’t rush into regulating driverless vehicles until there is more research," says Barbara Harsha, executive director of the Governors Highway Safety Association.

For all the hoo-rah, though, there are no real-world automated cars yet. A few with self-driving capability are being tested in states that permit them — only California, Nevada and Florida, though others are considering it.

Expect fast change, says Google CEO and co-founder Sergey Brin. "You can count on one hand the number of years until ordinary people can experience this," he said last September when California Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law allowing self-driving vehicles.

Google has more than 500,000 miles on Toyota Prius and Lexus RX 450h vehicles that use radar, lasers, cameras and computers to autonomously go from point A to B without whacking other traffic. To emphasize the point, Google made a video of a blind man at the wheel.

"The Google car is the most automated," Friedman says, but even it is not "what I jokingly call 'The Jetsons Car,' where you sit back and enjoy the ride, and your job is just to tell the car where to go. Other than that ... you’re not engaged with the car at all; it’s like a plane or train."

NHTSA defined levels of vehicle automation from 0 to 4. The Jetsons’ car would be a 4. Google’s are Level 3, meaning a driver must be at the wheel able to take back control.

"Level 3 is truly in the testing phase and these guidelines are ensuring that the testing is done so it’s safe for the driver and safe for everyone else on the road. We want to make sure the drivers in these test vehicles, for instance, have appropriate training," Friedman says. "How does the car warn the driver of the need to take over? How much warning does it give? How does the car interact overall with the person?" Friedman said, ticking off federal concerns to be studied.

In a level 2 car, many of which are on sale now, the driver is in overall control, but two or more automated systems such as adaptive cruise control and lane centering can work together to independently correct the vehicle.

At level 1, the driver’s in charge, though what NHTSA calls "function-specific" systems, such as stability control (now federally required) may assist the driver. NHTSA said that its research into automated systems might result in more of them being required.

Level 0: "That's what most of us have driven most of our lives. You're the only thing responsible for all the core functions," Friedman says.

Simply defining levels of automation was a needed starting point, and NHTSA gave itself four years to research and make recommendations "before Level 3 begins to commercialize," Friedman says. "But if Google moves faster, we'll move faster."

Contributing: Fred Meier, Jayne O'Donnell.

Article courtesy of James R. Healey from USA TODAY.
Virginia Tech Researcher Honored for Work on Safe Driving

The White House has given Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Director Thomas Dingus an award for innovative people called “Champion of Change.”

Federal officials credit Dingus, 55, of Blacksburg and 11 other transportation figures in the country with “exemplary leadership in developing or implementing transportation technology solutions.”

The honorees will collect their awards and hold a panel discussion at the White House on Wednesday, according to information released by the university Monday.

“It’s a very high honor. I’m very excited,” Dingus said.

The Obama administration “champions” are described as ordinary Americans doing extraordinary things “to out-innovate, out-educate, and out-build the rest of the world.” In addressing some of the dozens of previous winners, President Barack Obama has said: “Change happens from the bottom up.”

The hazardous nature of texting and driving is understood in scientific terms — that is, that it dangerously multiplies the risk of a crash — in part because of the work of the transportation institute, whose large facility on the Blacksburg campus is adjacent to the Smart Road test track.

With 350 faculty, staff and students, the 25-year-old VTTC has a budget exceeding $40 million. It is the second largest traffic safety research hub at a U.S. university. Dingus has led it since 1996. He holds a Ph.D. in engineering and operations research from Tech and is an endowed professor of civil and environmental engineering at the school.

Dingus traces his passion for traffic safety research to his early interest in the human factors field, which optimizes the interaction of people and machines. During graduate studies at Tech, he explored human factors in auto safety with Walt Wierwille, an emeritus professor of industrial and systems engineering and a mentor.

When it comes to injury prevention, automotive studies are pivotal because “most injuries occur behind the wheel,” according to a presentation Dingus wrote in connection with his award.

Dingus thinks the institute’s best work to date is its naturalist driving studies, which began in the early 2000s and continue today. Using an internally created method, the institute has equipped 4,000 cars, trucks and motorcycles with cameras and electronic sensors in cooperation with drivers who agree to be monitored for months or years at a time. The institute periodically releases findings about the causes of crashes and near-crashes based on the video clips and driver performance data collected during the monitoring period.

A major finding, that texting while driving a heavy truck increases the risk of a crash or near-crash 23 times, “has been touted nationally, from the New York Times to the Ad Council to AT&T,” Dingus wrote. “The ‘23 times’ message helped lead U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and the U.S. Department of Transportation to issue a call to end distracted driving.”

Dingus said 39 states and the District of Columbia have banned texting by drivers, an acknowledgement of the role that distraction and inattention play in crashes.

But fatigue is another culprit. Tech said this month that fatigue is a cause of 20 percent of crashes, “rather than the 2 or 3 percent previously estimated based on surveys, simulator studies, and test tracks.”

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has cut the number of hours a trucker can work within a week from 82 to 70 based on information gleaned from Tech’s data acquisition system, Dingus said.

In addition, VTTC has released widely publicized studies about teen driving risk. Teens are four times more likely than adults to have a crash or near crash while distracted, Dingus said.

Parents who want to mitigate a teen’s driving risk, Dingus told the Edmunds Safety Conference in 2011, should obtain monitoring equipment, such as that supplied by DriveCam and insurers. Such systems can be set up to detect higher-risk driving and then record video clips and driver-performance data that a parent can use to counsel or sanction a child driver after the fact.

“If you do it right, the child, teenager, learns how to not have the device record data by not speeding, not driving aggressively, things like that,” Dingus said. “Then they’re automatically driving safer to avoid being prosecuted, if you will.”

Owners of commercial fleets can employ the same technology to monitor commercial drivers, he said.

“The bottom line is that Dr. Dingus and the work that he does at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute saves lives,” said Robert Walters, vice president for research at Virginia Tech. “It’s commonplace to see a news report about the dangers of distracted driving, texting while driving, or other hazards, and then hear more about the Smart Road and the research done at Virginia Tech to help keep people safe behind the wheel.

Many of these vital insights travel directly from Tom’s institute straight into public policy, and the White House has noticed.”

Article courtesy of Jeff Sturgeon from The Roanoke Times.
Planes, Trains and Automobiles Top Anthony Foxx's Agenda

The reins at the Transportation Department’s Navy Yard headquarters may be changing hands, but the array of issues that will confront Anthony Foxx on his first day as transportation secretary won’t look much different from the ones that faced his predecessor, Ray LaHood.

When President Barack Obama announced Foxx’s nomination at the White House, the North Carolinian told the much-praised LaHood that he would “do my absolute best to uphold the standards you have set at USDOT.”

He also borrowed a line LaHood loves to use when addressing the nation’s infrastructure funding gap, saying “there is no such thing as a Democratic or Republican road, bridge, port, airfield or rail system. We must work together across party lines to enhance this nation’s infrastructure.”

Here are eight issues Foxx will inherit:

Sequester
Depending on how Congress spends the rest of its pre-recess summer, the sequester may stick around for a while. If Congress fails to replace or otherwise blunt the effects of the sequester before the end of September, Foxx’s most pressing task may be dealing with a fresh threat of air traffic controller furloughs and contract tower closures. Given the political and media frenzy around aviation delays caused by furloughs in April, this would mean Foxx could be thrust quickly into a high-wire act while he is still figuring out his way around the job.

Under questioning by Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) about how he would deal with the sequester during his Senate Commerce Committee confirmation hearing, Foxx said he would try to maximize efficiency with “the least amount of pain as possible.” But he added that he “cannot guarantee you there will be painless choices.”

Highway Funding
Finding money for the next highway and transit bill will be one of his biggest challenges, and Foxx isn’t likely to live up to LaHood’s goal of a transportation bill with a more than $500 billion price tag. The administration has taken flak for repeatedly offering up the “peace dividend” as a pay-for, with many calling that plan a budget gimmick.

LaHood has promised a “big and bold” funding plan from the president later this year, and Foxx will play a key role in selling the proposal to reluctant members of Congress.

Foxx will play a key role in selling the proposal to reluctant members of Congress.

Amtrak Reauthorization
Since the Senate has already passed a water resources bill, the upcoming passenger rail legislation could be Foxx’s first chance to substantially weigh in on what the administration would like to see in a bill before Congress. The two parties are far apart — House Republicans are seeking cuts in the mandate for nationwide service, which will face opposition in the Democratic Senate.

The railroad has trimmed losses in recent years but still needs more than $1 billion a year in federal funding. Foxx has supported transit in Charlotte, but he will need to widen his scope to take on the country’s passenger rail network.

NextGen
The transition to a satellite-based air traffic control system to cut down on delays and increase the capacity of the aviation system remains an enormous challenge for the Federal Aviation Administration and DOT. That’s because of the program’s complexity and many interrelated moving parts but also because of the multiple billions of dollars required to implement it.

That price tag would present a challenge at any time and is an even bigger issue as lawmakers look for ways to trim spending. Foxx will have to find ways to thread the needle to keep the money flowing — while also managing the massive project.

Distracted Driving
Distracted driving is perhaps the highest-profile safety issue associated with LaHood’s tenure, and he leaves office with a legacy of helping to elevate awareness of the dangers of texting while driving.

Foxx promised that he would continue LaHood’s crusade, saying at his confirmation hearing that LaHood had “baked that
into the DNA of the Department of Transportation, and I don’t think you have anything to worry about.”

In his final “On the Go” video blog, LaHood said he had faith that Foxx will carry the torch.

“I believe my successor will continue this campaign because it’s at the top of the list of the safety agenda we’ve developed here at the Department of Transportation,” he said in the video.

Dreamliner review
Fox will be at the helm for the unveiling of FAA’s review of the certification process that found the 787 Dreamliner was safe to fly. The review, which was initiated after a Japanese 787’s lithium-ion battery malfunctioned and caught fire on the tarmac, will examine, among other things, whether FAA’s “special conditions” for the battery were adequate.

That review is separate from an ongoing National Transportation Safety Board investigation into the root cause of the problem. If the DOT review recommends any changes that would require legislation, Foxx would help shepherd those changes through Congress.

Pending rules
Fox will also inherit a host of pending rules, and all have deadlines that will occur on his watch. That includes several big-ticket safety-related items, such as a much-watched rule that would bump up the training requirements for commercial airline pilots. The rule, which is supposed to be completed by Aug. 1, was issued after a deadly 2009 regional jet crash that also spurred major changes to pilot rest-and-fatigue requirements.

Also in the hopper is a long-delayed rule that would mandate new vehicles be equipped with cameras enabling drivers to see behind them. That rule seeks to reduce the number of children killed by cars and trucks moving in reverse.

Another high-profile potential change for air travelers is whether the FAA will relax rules that require personal electronic devices like iPods and laptops to be turned off when a plane is operating below 10,000 feet, typically during takeoffs and landings. An industry working group is expected to produce a report on the issue later this summer, which could form the basis of regulatory changes to the way the FAA handles this issue.

Ongoing safety matters
As one of the nation’s top safety officials, Fox will also have to weigh in on issues expected to emerge during the drafting of the next transportation bill.

Those include efforts to alter the size and weight of large trucks on the nation’s federally funded highways, efforts by advocates to mandate auto safety items and increase the frequency of recalls, human fatigue issues across all modes of transportation and issues related to air traffic controller staffing levels and separation between planes.

Article courtesy of Kathryn A. Wolfe and Adam Snider from Politico.
LaHood: Expect "Big" Announcement from Obama on Transportation Funding

Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today said that later this year, the president could make a significant announcement about transportation funding -- but he offered few details on what, exactly, such an announcement might entail.

LaHood’s comments came at a gathering of officials from the transportation construction industry in Washington, D.C., Tuesday.

LaHood’s comments came in response to a question about adopting a mileage-based user fee to replace the gas tax. "The president’s going to be big and bold about what his vision is," LaHood said. "I’m not going to steal his thunder."

LaHood said he expects President Obama to make an announcement about transportation funding later this year, but it probably won’t happen until the debates about immigration, gun control and sequestration play out. LaHood will leave office once Charlotte Mayor Anthony Foxx is confirmed as his replacement.

If the president does take up the issue, it would be significant. Stakeholders in the transportation community have become increasingly vocal in recent years over the disconnect between the president’s tendency to use lofty rhetoric about the need to invest in infrastructure and how they keep putting this proposal out there year after year, because they don’t really have a realistic way to finance it," Jack Schenendorf, an attorney who spent 25 years on the staff of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, told Governing earlier this year. "It really turns into a mirage, kind of. I don’t think that’s helpful."

LaHood was famously rebuked by the administration in 2009 after he said he’d like to consider the idea of charging motorists based on how many miles they drive. But a proposal like that is viewed widely among transportation wonks as the best step to address the unsustainable gas tax, which isn’t indexed to inflation, hasn’t been raised in 20 years, and stands to become less useful as vehicles become more fuel-efficient.

During reauthorization of the last highway bill, lawmakers failed to find a way to boost revenue for infrastructure -- even though lawmakers of all stripes often emphasize the need to improve roads and bridges. The biggest stumbling block was the political challenge of finding a significant revenue stream to replace or supplement the gas tax.

The administration was not considered to have played a meaningful role during that debate, so if the president did put forward a serious transportation funding proposal, it could help shape that debate when discussions about the highway bill ramp up. The current highway bill expires in September 2014.

ITSVa 2013-2014 Membership Packages

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<td>★ Large logo on ITSVA website with link to company website</td>
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<td>★ Legislative Reception exhibit (preferred location), plus 5 registrations</td>
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<td>★ 5 Annual Conference registrations</td>
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<td>★ CEUs – registration for 1 employee in any course</td>
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**INDIVIDUAL OPTIONS**

**Annual Conference**

- Exhibit - $1,100
- Sponsorship
  - Breakfast - $600
  - Breaks - $850
  - Lunch/Reception - $950
  - Program Back Cover - $1,500
  - Program Inside Cover - $950
- Registration - $260/person

**Legislative Reception**

- Exhibit - $600
- Sponsorship - $500
- Registration - $25/person

**Newsletter**

- Full page advertisement: $1,000/year or $300/issue
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- Quarter page advertisement: $500/year or $150/issue

**CEU Courses ($45/credit hour)**

- 3 Credit Course - $135/person
- 4 Credit Course - $180/person
RICHMOND - Gov. Bob McDonnell today announced that Virginia’s Office of Transportation Public-Private Partnerships (OTP3) was recently recognized as an international leader in Public-Private Partnerships, receiving two awards at the 2013 Partnership Awards in London. The Partnership Awards is an annual event that recognizes public-private projects, teams, and innovation across the globe.

Speaking about the announcement, Gov. McDonnell said “Virginia has a long history of partnering with the private sector to advance critical infrastructure projects. However, my administration has continued to improve our program by creating the Office of Transportation Public-Private Partnerships and issuing new streamlined guidance documents. As a result of these reforms, Virginia is leveraging a state investment of approximately $600 million into over $3 billion of infrastructure and advancing long stalled projects all throughout the commonwealth. I applaud the efforts of OTP3 and the Virginia Department of Transportation for turning what was already a well-recognized program into an international leader.”

At the awards, OTP3 was recognized as the “Best Central Government PPP Organization” and OTP3 Deputy Director Dusty Holcombe was recognized with the “Best Individual Contribution Award.” These awards follow the closure of three deals in 2012, with a total value exceeding almost all other transportation markets, and Inspiratia, a leading P3 industry publication, ranking Virginia second as one of the most active transportation P3 markets globally. In addition, OTP3 Director Tony Kinn was recognized as “P3 Public Sector Entrepreneur of the Year” by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) in October 2012. Earlier this year, the Midtown Tunnel project received “North American Toll Road Deal of the Year” by Project Finance Magazine.

“OTP3 was created to consolidate Virginia’s P3 program under one roof and attract the expertise and innovation necessary to advance these critical projects,” said Secretary of Transportation Sean T. Connaughton. “Working with our transportation agencies, but particularly VDOT and its leadership, OTP3 is advancing innovative solutions to some of Virginia’s most complex and expensive transportation challenges.”

As part of Virginia’s P3 reform efforts, OTP3 created a PPTA project pipeline consisting of candidate and conceptual projects. In the weeks ahead, Gov. McDonnell and OTP3 will be making announcements about several additional projects under consideration.