

KITS

kansas intelligent transportation systems

Implementing technologies that  
improve the safety and efficiency  
of the transportation system

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Winter/Spring 2006

# Newsletter

## AVL System To Provide a Life-Saving Edge

Sedgwick County has begun deployment of a new Public Safety Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system that will allow 9-1-1 dispatchers to track the location of public safety vehicles throughout Sedgwick County. The AVL project is a cooperative effort between Sedgwick County, the City of Wichita, and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT). The goal of the project is to effectively and efficiently manage and deploy public safety agency vehicles to provide quicker, life-saving response to emergencies. The \$2.4 million project is one of the first major Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects in the region and will help provide a multi-agency public safety communications network to facilitate regional information sharing.

Implementation of the AVL system will require new equipment and upgrades including:

- Upgrading Sedgwick County's existing 800 MHz mobile data system used for communication with public safety vehicles to receive and process global positioning satellite (GPS) data.
- Purchasing and installing laptop computers, mounting hardware, and radio modems for approximately 400 public safety vehicles belonging to Sedgwick County EMS, Sedgwick County Fire Department, Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office, Wichita Fire Department, and Wichita Police Department.
- Upgrading the Northrop Grumman CAD system utilized by Sedgwick County Emergency Communications (9-1-1). This will allow the actual location of vehicles to be displayed on an electronic mapping system. The CAD system will also use current location information to determine which unit to recommend for assignment to calls for service.

The AVL project is a result of several years of planning by Sedgwick County, the City of Wichita, and KDOT, who have agreed to jointly plan and fund Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) projects within the Wichita region. The Public Safety AVL Project was listed as a very high priority

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*A 911 dispatcher monitors the AVL system*

## ITS Heartland 7th Annual Meeting March 14 & 15, 2006 Des Moines, Iowa



ITS Heartland, the Midwest Chapter of ITS America that includes Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma will hold its 7th Annual Meeting and

Technology Showcase at the downtown Marriott Hotel in Des Moines, Iowa on March 14 – 15.

The conference will feature presentations from both national and local ITS experts and will provide an excellent opportunity to see the latest in ITS technology as well as network with other ITS professionals. A variety of topics will be covered in this year's conference sessions including:

- Amber Alerts
- Communications Infrastructure
- GIS in ITS
- ITS Engineer's Panel
- Municipal ITS Deployment
- New Legislation & Upcoming Requirements
- Remote Sensing & Detection
- Roundtable on Maintaining Field Devices
- Transit & ITS
- Travel Time Simulation
- Weather & ITS
- Work Zones

Register Online at the Heartland's newly designed website, [www.itsheartlandmeeting.org](http://www.itsheartlandmeeting.org) or visit the site to obtain additional conference information. If you have any questions regarding the meeting, please contact Valeria Lefler at the Mid-America Transportation Center, University of Nebraska, at (402) 472-1974 or [vllefler2@unl.edu](mailto:vllefler2@unl.edu).

## KDOT ITS Steering Committee Selects New ITS Projects

The KDOT ITS Steering Committee recently made ITS project selections for the FY 2008 ITS Set-Aside Program. The ten year program was established in 2000 to facilitate the deployment of rural and urban ITS programs in the State of Kansas. Since 2000, the ITS Steering Committee, comprised of KDOT staff and stakeholders from other organizations, has accepted applications from cities, counties, other state agencies and KDOT offices to fund ITS projects. This year, the following state-wide or regional projects were selected:

- KC Scout CCTV Cameras – Additional cameras in outlying areas
- AMBER Alert Grant – Provides matching dollars for federal funds
- Statewide Transportation Operations Center (TOC) Pilot Project
- KHP Total Stations Enhancements
- Driver Notification of Delay in Pilot Car Operations
- KHP Photogrammetry Project
- ITS Small Investigative and Development Research Fund

Project selected that will impact local communities include:

- Permanent Changeable Message Signs for I-70 Polk-Quincy Viaduct in Topeka
- Garden City Speed Monitoring Trailer
- Russell County GPS Data Collection
- Overland Park Flood Warning Tie to TOC
- Manhattan Signal Coordination Project
- Overland Park Adaptive Traffic Signal System
- Topeka Traffic Control/ Video Surveillance System
- Colwick ADA Compliant School Crossing

Solicitation letters for FY 2009 will be mailed to City and County contacts by April 15 of this year. Please contact Karen Gilbertson, P.E., ITS Engineer, at (785) 296-3387 if you would like more information about any of these projects or the ITS Set-Aside program.

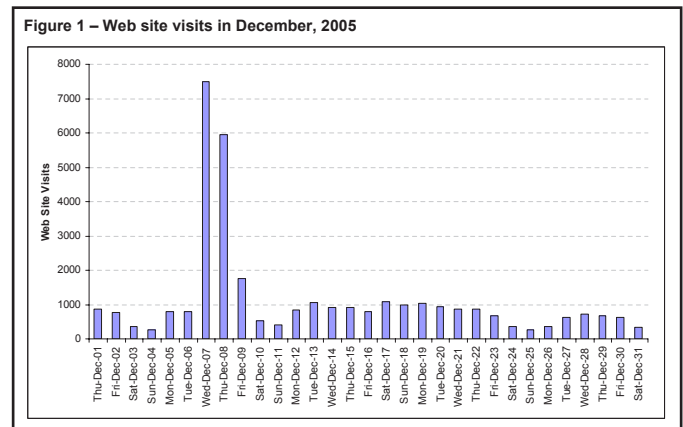
It's a new year with new horizons for the Kansas City Scout freeway management system jointly operated by Kansas and Missouri. Scout began operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week last year and is continuing to improve its system. The states have green-lighted the following enhancement projects for the Scout system that will further improve the Kansas City-area freeway commute beginning this year.

**Travel Times:** Staff is currently laying the groundwork to post travel times on Scout message boards in 2006. The amount of time necessary to travel between various points on the Scout system will be shown and will help alert commuters to road conditions or delays that might extend their normal trip.

**Regional Alert System:** This system will allow subscribers to receive personal traffic and weather information via email and pager alerts from Scout. The alerts will warn travelers of unexpected congestion or planned freeway lane closures in the Kansas City region. Subscribers should be able to sign up for service at Scout's website later this year.

**Improved Scout Website:** Scout's Information Technology specialists are 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, for example, when demand for Scout's real-time traffic data and images is at its peak.

*Information for this article provided by Dianna Kidwell, KC Scout Communications Director.*



*The impact severe weather has on demand for real-time traffic information is made clear in a recent special report of Scout's operations. Here, the report's graph highlights the dramatic increase in Scout web site usage during two recent days of severe weather – December 7 and 8, 2005.*

## Speed Trailer Improves Roadway Safety

The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office purchased two speed trailers in 2004 and found them to be a pro-active approach to traffic enforcement. The speed trailers were funded through KDOT's ITS Set-Aside Program.

The speed trailers have provided a variety of benefits and have allowed law enforcement to better focus their resources. Sedgwick County often places trailers in locations where the public has complained about speeders and provides reports



showing the speed patterns to those citizens. Many times perceptions of speed are not viable, with much of the data showing residential area drivers at or below the speed limit. In areas where speeding is a problem, the trailers cause drivers to reassess their speed. Two considerations in locating trailers have been avoiding placement on roadways with narrow shoulders and putting them in well lit areas to avoid vandalism. Given the positive public perception of the speed trailers they have been a beneficial tool to law enforcement.

*Information for this article provided by Lt. Tommie Cribbs, Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office*

## KDOT Federal AMBER Alert Grant



The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) received a federal AMBER Alert grant in July of 2005 that will allow improvement of traveler information systems in Kansas. The grant provides \$400,000 in funding and is designed to allow DOTs to improve the communication of AMBER Alerts and other important information to motorists using Changeable Message Signs (CMSs) and other traveler information systems. The funding will be used to install CMSs throughout the state, provide informational kiosks at rest areas, automate communication of AMBER Alerts to KDOT's 511 system and improve communication with law enforcement.

KDOT is currently a member of the AMBER Alert Task Force, headed by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and Attorney General's Office. As a member of the task force, KDOT currently uses its available resources to help convey AMBER Alerts to the public by putting alerts on KC Scout message signs and KDOT's 511 telephone system and traveler information website.

## ITS Calendar

March 14-15	ITS Heartland 7th Annual Meeting & Technology Showcase, Des Moines, IA
April 11-12	Kansas Transportation Engineering Conference Manhattan, KS
May 7-9	ITS America 2006 Annual Meeting & Exposition Philadelphia, PA
May 23-24	Transportation Safety Conference Overland Park, KS
July 20-26	IMSAs National Conference & IMSA School Overland Park, KS
August 13-16	National Rural ITS Conference Big Sky, MT

## KC Scout Receives Excellence in Transportation Award

KC Scout recently received the Kansas City Institute of Transportation Engineers (KCITE) Excellence in Transportation award. In 2005 Scout also received the Missouri Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity and the National Transportation Public Affairs Workshop (NTPAW) award for Scout's outreach activities.



Ray Webb, KC Scout Traffic Operations Center Manager, and Dianna Kidwell, Communications Director, receive award from KCITE President Mike Wahlstedt

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in these planning efforts. As a result, RCC Consultants was contacted in 2003 to provide a needs assessment and alternatives analysis report regarding mobile data and automatic vehicle location systems within the region. RCC Consultants recommended an upgrade of the existing mobile data system for public safety use.

The AVL project, scheduled to be completed by July 2006, would not have been possible without a great deal of cooperation and teamwork between the partners. None of the agencies had the resources to completely fund the system; however, by working together, they were able to utilize federal ITS funds and KDOT ITS Set-Aside funds to supplement local funding. This ability to cooperate and work together will enhance the other ITS projects that are planned within the region.

*Information for this article provided by Kent Koehler, Senior Project Manager, Sedgwick County*



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