TECHNOLOGY NEWS

Iowa's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP): providing transportation technology transfer for Iowa's cities and counties

What's GASB 34—and why should you care?

by Tom Maze, former director of the Center for Transportation Research and Education; Transportation Sector Leader, Howard R. Green Company

Editor's note: News about coming changes in financial reporting requirements is just beginning to hit the radar screens of Iowa's governmental agencies. These changes will affect how agencies report major infrastructure assets, including roads and bridges. If "GASB (say gasbee) 34" is just a mysterious blip on the edge of your own awareness, this short series of articles will help you understand what the buzz is about—and why you should sit up and take notice.

How do you report infrastructure investments?

Traditionally, state and local governmental agencies have used cash accounting methods to report infrastructure assets like roads, bridges, water and sewer facilities, dams, etc. With cash accounting, the capital cost of an infrastructure investment appears in an agency's annual financial report during the year in which the cost of construction is incurred; the value of existing physical assets does not appear on financial reports.

In other words, using cash accounting methods, the value of all physical assets is off the books.

In actuality, of course, physical infrastructure like roads and bridges generally continues to have value, or usefulness, long after agencies have incurred the cost of construction. And, just as cars depreciate in value, the value or usefulness of roads, bridges, and other physical assets declines over the course of many years, typically 20–50 years.

A more realistic report of an agency's financial status would therefore show the existing value of the agency's capital assets. Under this accounting method—accrual accounting—the cost, or the loss in value, of an asset is spread across the asset's useful lifetime rather than accounted for in its first year.

Accrual accounting keeps infrastructure assets on the books and is more consistent with the reporting of other costs of doing business.

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (see article on page 3) has been carefully studying the valuation of government capital investments for many years. In fact, the board issued its first concept statement regarding this issue as long ago as 1987.

Sign up for breaking news and information

IN ADDITION to publishing this newsletter, your Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) will soon start using a subscriber-only e-mail service to communicate with Iowa's local governments about upcoming training opportunities, legislative updates, and other time-sensitive information.

If you're interested in participating in this service, subscribe by e-mail to the editor: mbrink@iastate.edu. In the subject line or body of the e-mail, simply type "Subscribe LTAP."

Only LTAP staff will be able to send mail to the subscriber list. Members may unsubscribe at any time.

Center for Transportation Research and Education   **IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

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" . . . the value or usefulness of roads, bridges, and other physical assets declines over the course of many years, typically 20–50 years."

Finally, in June 1999, GASB Statement 34 (or GASB 34) was published. GASB 34 requires state and local governments to begin reporting the value of their infrastructure assets, including roads, bridges, water and sewer facilities, and dams, in their annual financial reports on an accrual accounting basis.

Why the change?

Accrual accounting methods are generally the standard in the private sector. When most of us see an annual report, we therefore expect to see an accounting of the remaining useful value of all assets. By bringing public agencies in line with accounting norms, GASB 34 has the potential to make agencies' overall financial condition more comprehensible to the public, investors, creditors, and the agencies themselves.

The principle purpose of Statement 34, then, is to "improve the accountability of governments to their citizens by providing better, more accessible information about the condition and costs of capital assets."[1]

Ultimately, the new standards may encourage better stewardship of public resources. By reporting the value of public assets over time, governmental agencies will make their improvements—or lack of improvements—in public assets more apparent.

Who's affected, and how soon?

The new requirements for reporting physical assets will be phased in, beginning with the largest governmental agencies (see table below). In the first year that agencies are required to report the value of capital assets, they need only report the value of newly acquired or built capital assets. That is, they need only comply with GASB 34's *prospective reporting requirements.*

- Agencies with $100 million or more per year in revenue must meet prospective reporting requirements for the fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2001.

- Those with annual revenues of $10 million to less than $100 million have until the fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2002, to meet prospective reporting requirements.

- Smaller agencies with less than $10 million in annual revenue have until the fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2003, to comply with prospective reporting requirements.

Schedule for complying with GASB 34 reporting requirements

Reporting requirements	Agency's annual revenue		
	$100 million or more	$10 million to less than $100 million	less than $10 million
Prospective	fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2001	fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2002	fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2003
Retroactive	fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2005	fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2006	encouraged but not required to report

Agencies then have four more years to comply with GASB 34's *retroactive reporting requirements*; that is, they have four more years to determine and report values for their preexisting capital assets.

- Agencies with $100 million or more per year in revenue must meet retroactive reporting requirements for the fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2005.

- Those with annual revenues of $10 million to less than $100 million have until the fiscal year beginning after June 15, 2006, to meet retroactive reporting requirements.

- Smaller agencies with less than $10 million in annual revenue are encouraged but not required to report infrastructure values retroactively.

What does GASB 34 mean for Iowa's cities and counties?
CTRE staff have recently discussed this question with several managers of local governmental agencies. Some managers believe that meeting the new standards will be not be difficult because they have a good inventory base and good cost records. Others view GASB 34 as a significant unfunded mandate.

Regardless of what shape you think your agency is in with regards to complying with GASB 34, we encourage you to discuss the statement with your agency's financial officer, who should be able to help you develop a strategy for addressing GASB 34. You might also contact the Iowa League of Cities or the Iowa State Association of Counties.

What's next?
Basically, GASB 34 allows two methods for assessing the value of infrastructure: the depreciation approach, and a modified approach. In the next issue of *Technology News*, we will discuss these approaches and other issues related to meeting GASB 34 requirements.

In the meantime, visit the web site of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board, www.rutgers.edu/Accounting/raw/gasb/, for a summary of GASB 34 and related information. •

[1] Terry K. Patton and Penny S. Wardlow, "Why Infrastructure Reporting?" GASB Action, Vol. 16, No. 5, May, 1999

Where does GASB get its authority?

THE GOVERNMENTAL Accounting Standards Board (GASB) is a nonprofit entity responsible for establishing accounting standards—or generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP)—for state and local governments. Along with its sister organization the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), which sets accounting standards for the private sector, GASB is operated by the nonprofit, privately funded Financial Accounting Foundation.

Although there is no legal requirement that Iowa governments follow GAAP, it is generally prudent business practice to do so. For example, public agencies follow GASB standards in order to obtain clear opinions from their auditors. Even more important, following GAAP will likely reduce the cost of issuing debt through general obligation or revenue bonds. Bonding organizations want to see (1) a government agency's true financial condition and (2) accounting information based on GAAP. Communities that don't follow GAAP may pay more to issue debt in terms of their bond rating. •

IOWA LTAP

Iowa Department of Transportation

Center for Transportation Research and Education

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Spin your web: writing HTML

This is the last article in a series about web site development for local transportation agencies. The first five articles covered planning a web site, acquiring the tools for creating it, choosing and organizing content, helping users navigate your site, and creating the look and feel. All of these articles and links to web development resources are available online at *www.ctre.iastate.edu/pubs/web/*.

HTML, WHICH stands for hypertext markup language, is the basic code that makes web pages show their stuff. It tells browsing software such as Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer what images to display, what color to use for the background, what text and graphics should be linked, how wide the page should be, and much more. Even if you decide to use web authoring software such as Microsoft's FrontPage or Hot MetalPro, understanding the underlying HTML code can be beneficial.

Since HTML is the basis of the web, you may be wondering why we saved it for the end of this series. That's because the most important steps in building a web site occur on paper as you plan the site structure and organize its content. Creating the actual pages of your site should come last.

Web page basics
There are two basic parts to a web page: a head and a body. None of the information inside the head is displayed in the actual page. Instead it helps search engines classify your web page. Items to include in a head are the page's title, which is displayed at the very top of a browser window, a brief description of the page's contents, and a list of keywords. Leaving this information out won't hurt your page's functionality, but for any pages you want people to find, it is recommended.

The body contains all the content that web users see, including text, images, and links.

Learning the lingo of HTML
If you ever used early word processing software, learning the syntax of HTML will seem familiar. For example, in the program Wordstar, making some text bold required you to insert a command, "control B" (^B), before and after the text you wanted bold.

It would look like this on the screen: Let me ^Bemphasize^B but like this on paper: Let me **emphasize**.

If you forgot the second ^B, the rest of your document would be bolded when you printed it.

HTML is similar to these formatting commands. In HTML the commands, called tags, tell text and images how to display. Many tags must occur in pairs; forgetting the second, or closing, tag can make your page display strangely or sometimes not at all.

Sample HTML tags
A opening tag consists of a less-than symbol (<) followed by a code word and then a greater-than symbol (>), e.g. <table>. A closing tag adds a slash (/) like this: </table>.

The tags for a basic page are these (with sample text between opening and closing tags):

```
<html>
<head>
    <title>My first page</title>
</head>
<body bgcolor=white>
<h1>This is a first-level header</h1>
    <p>This is a paragraph. The tag at the beginning of this line cre-
```
ates a line break or carriage return on the page and tells the browser that the text following is plain text, no header. A close paragraph tag (</p>) is not required. To start a new paragraph, you need to type . . .
```
    <p>This is a new paragraph.
<h2>This is a second-level header</h2>
    <P>There are six levels of headers, each getting progressively
```
smaller.
```
</body>
</html>
```

Title

This figure shows how the HTML code above would display in Netscape Navigator on a Mac.

Elaborating on the basic tags
Many HTML tags can have extra information included with them that tells the browser to do things like center a header or add a background color. Browsers use default settings such as left alignment for text and images and the color black for text. To change the default settings and/or add extra information requires changing a tag's attribute(s). For example, to specify a background color for the entire page, that attribute needs to be specified within the body tag like this: <body bgcolor=yellow>.

Using tables to organize the page
HTML does not have a way for placing images and text in precise locations on a page. That's why many people use tables with invis-

ible borders to achieve the look they want. The basic table tags include the following:

```
<table border=1>
    <tr>
        <td>This is a cell.</td>
        <td>This is a cell in the same row.</td>
    </tr>
    <tr>
        <td>This is a cell in a new row.</td>
    </tr>
</table>
```

The tag <tr> establishes a row and <td> a cell. The table above has two rows, with two cells on top and one on the bottom. The code above would render a table like this:

To make the table and cell borders invisible, change the border attribute in the table tag: <table border=0>. To give a table thicker borders, change 0 to 1 or more. Experiment.

Inserting images into web pages

Inserting an image requires one tag, <img src=insert your image file name here>, e.g. <img src=ctrelogo.gif>. If your image file is in a different directory than your HTML file, you'll need to add a path directory in front of the image file name, e.g. <img src=webfiles/ctrelogo.gif>.

To insert an image into the table above, the code would look like this:

```
<table>
    <tr>
        <td>This is a cell.</td>
        <td>This is a cell in the same row.</td>
    </tr>
    <tr>
        <td><img src=ctrelogo.gif></td>
    </tr>
</table>
```

Creating links

Links are what the web is all about. The beginning tag is <a href> and the closing tag is . Both tags must be present to create a link, and whatever is between the two tags becomes the link. This is true for text and images. To link the image in the first cell to the Center for Transportation Research and Education's home page, the code would look like this:

<td><img src=ctrelogo.gif></td>

Online resources

There are many excellent resources online that go into greater detail about HTML and all other aspects of web development. For links to a few of the most useful sites, see *www.ctre.iastate.edu/pubs/web/.* •

How to write, save, and view a new HTML file

HTML CAN BE written with a simple text editor such as Wordpad or Notepad on a PC or Simpletext on a Mac.

Open a new document, then type the sample code in the article on the opposite page. Use the "save as" feature and select the "html, htm" file type option. Save the document on your computer's hard drive.

To see your own work, open your Internet browser, then use File > Open and browse to the file you just created.

If you typed in the HTML code exactly as it is in the article, including the tabs, you'll notice that your web page didn't show the tabs. Tabs and carriage returns don't show up on the web page, but they can be helpful for you to organize your code as you're writing it.

Another thing that won't show is more than one space between individual characters. For example, if you're in the habit of typing two spaces after a period, you needn't bother because only one space will show. •

Putting a positive spin on improvements: Part II

Adapted from information provided by Gil Janes,
Vice President, Howard R. Green Company

Recap of part 1

EVERY transportation improvement is as much a people project as an engineering project.
Involving the public early and routinely through good communication is key to a successful project.
Listening is the most important part of communication.

Charettes can get the communication process off to a good start. A charette is a structured problem-solving process that can be used early in the improvement planning phase to begin dialogue and develop ownership of the project among the key players.

Research has shown that public projects that are successfully implemented generally share a common philosophy, a "systematic development of informed consent." In successful projects, the organization is both 100 percent responsible to a project's mission and 100 percent responsive to affected parties' needs. •

This is the second of two articles about involving the public in transportation improvement projects.

Individual and neighborhood meetings
Many times it is important to have public information/involvement meetings for communicating with and engaging the community and to create opportunities for property owners and stakeholders to be heard independently. It might be helpful to conduct individual surveys with affected parties to clearly understand their concerns and expectations regarding a project.

Make a reasonable effort to incorporate feasible ideas from these meetings and interviews into the design process. Be prepared to explain why some expectations are not in line with the project concept. Use these opportunities to clear up misconceptions before they become issues.

Public engagement skills
Successfully engaging the public at meetings involves employing good communications skills and presentation techniques.

Communicating effectively means setting an agenda, listening carefully to concerns, and responding clearly to input.

Successful presentation techniques include setting the stage comfortably, employing a professional posture, speaking clearly and directly to your audience, using eye contact and gestures where appropriate, and being attentive to your audience.

Public relations and public education
No matter how good your project design, unless it is presented in a manner to gain public acceptance and approval, it will not succeed. Using proven public relations tools and techniques when presenting your project to the public will be important to its overall success. A public information campaign includes many facets:

• News releases, service club presentations, special events promotions, and even purchased advertising are all possible communications channels that should be used by the project committee, city or county staff, and the project engineer.

Project announcements and press releases demonstrate to everyone affected—including residents, commuters, and school officials—that you want to keep them informed.

• Brochures and/or flyers can advertise the project's goals and mission statement. Such materials can tell the public why the improvement is needed and how service will be improved. Other promotional materials may include a project logo, artistic renderings of the project, postcards, place mats, plastic hardhats, buttons, and t-shirts.

• Tools for an effective public presentation may include temporary signage to direct motorists to their destination; professional visual aids, such as layered, color CAD graphics and project renderings; and promotional materials.

Finally
Because of the number and variety of players that may be affected by public improvements, a generous supply of "glue" is needed to get all of them working together. Good communications can provide that glue.

Each transportation improvement project is unique. An appropriate communications plan should be developed for each project, depending on the circumstances. Whether you or your consulting engineer develops and implements that plan, make sure it happens.

Putting a positive spin on improvements through active communications will strengthen relationships, promote public cooperation, reduce stress, and result in a successful project.

For more information
Contact Gil Janes, 800-728-7805,
gjanes@hrgreen.com. •

Media kit helps put
positive spin on PCC projects

MANY IOWA cities work diligently to create a positive public image for local construction projects. The Iowa Concrete Paving Association can help.

The ICPA has developed a media kit for contractors and local agencies. The kit, available on CD, is a series of Microsoft Word-based templates.

Templates include a letter to the media and several handouts: a description of the project, graphical presentation of the construction process, status updates, a roster of involved city personnel and contractors, background information about contractors, and a brief description of the qualities of concrete paving.

Contractors just fill in the blanks, according to John Cunningham, the ICPA's director of pave-

ment services. Users complete a basic menu with information common to several of the documents and links to project-related graphics. Then Word creates the documents, and the contractor customizes each page with project-specific information, which may include details about innovative technology, environmental sensitivity, or the need for the project.

Brief, clear instructions for using the kit to create either of two public relations packages are included on the CD.

For more information, talk to your concrete paving contractor, or contact John Cunningham, 515-963-0606, Jcunningham@mail.pavement.com. •

FHWA Partnership in Excellence Award

SAFETY Circuit Rider Tom McDonald was honored recently as one of the first recipients of the Federal Highway Adminstration's (FHWA) new Partnership in Excellence Award. Tom received the award for his contributions to and participation with the Iowa Safety Management System Coordinating Committee (SMSCC), which organized and implemented the safety management system and developed the Iowa Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Each member of the SMSCC received a Partnership in Excellence Award.

The award honors the partnership efforts of state and local governments, private industry, other federal agencies, and the FHWA working together to help ensure the best possible transportation system for the traveling public. •

Tom McDonald was one of the first recipients of the FHWA's new Partnership in Excellence Award.

Chickasaw County
teams up with 911 dispatch

CHICKASAW County Engineer Lyle Laartz sends this tip for contacting highway foremen during off-hours emergencies. The key is an agreement with the 911 dispatcher's office.

On evenings and weekends, the Chickasaw County maintenance superintendent and three foremen take turns being on call. Whoever is on call carries the emergency cell phone. To report a roadway emergency, be it a flood, snow drifts, storm debris, whatever, the public simply calls 911. The dis-patcher then calls the emergency cell phone and relays the information to the on-call foreman.

Every fall through local newspapers, the county engineer's office notifies the public about this system. It has proven convenient not only for the general public but for the sheriff's office, members of the board of supervisors, other foremen, and others who may need to contact the on-call foreman after hours.

For more information, contact Lyle Laartz, 515-394-2321. •

WEATHERVIEW

Current Iowa Weather Conditions for Decorah (IA 9)

Date/Time	
2/6/00 2:29:57 PM	
Atmospheric Data	
Air Temperature	31° F
Dew Point	31° F
Relative Humidity	98%
Average Wind Speed	9 mph (8 knots)
Wind Gust	10 mph (9 knots)
Wind Direction	NW (295°)
Precipitation	Yes

Surface Data	
Location	Surface Temperature
IA-9 WB Pavement	36° F
IA-9 EB Bridge Deck	35° F

Sub Surface Data	
Location	Sub Surface Temperature
IA-9 WB Pavement	28° F

Where does this weather information come from?

What type of weather information is available?

For National Weather Service forecasts, click HERE

Road Condition Report
Test Only Report

Return to the Main Page

A window to the weather

A NEW online service gives motorists a close look at up-to-the-minute weather conditions around the state.

"Weatherview" provides information from the Iowa Department of Transportation's 50 Roadway Weather Information System (RWIS) sites and 33 Aviation Weather Observing System sites. Air and road surface temperatures, wind direction and speed, bridge deck conditions, and more are provided in a clear, easy-to-read format.

Weatherview supplements the Iowa DOT's online road condition reports and road work reports to help travelers make informed decisions before they head out on the roads.

Development of the site is a joint effort of the Iowa DOT and the Center for Transportation Research and Education at Iowa State University. •

www.weatherview.dot.state.ia.us/

CTRE Services

Look what we can do for you

YOU'RE probably familiar with the Center for Transportation Research and Education's (CTRE) Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). LTAP brings you *Technology*

News, a transportation library, the Safety Circuit Rider, and several training workshops.

But CTRE also offers many other services for local agencies, like a

pavement management program, PCC pavement technology, and quick-response crash analyses for local planning.

This pullout brochure provides a

snapshot of CTRE's services and facilities for city and county transportation agencies. Look it over, then give us a call and tell us how we can serve you.

LTAP library

THE LTAP library carries

- ▼ over 1,200 publications
- ▼ 500 videotapes
- ▼ 17 sets of slide presentations
- ▼ 21 training packages for in-house, do-it-yourself training
- ▼ 6 compact disk training programs for use on any of five interactive compact disk (CD-I) players available for two to three month loans

All of these materials may be borrowed for free. The library also has many extra copies of publications which you may keep.

Requests for materials may be made online at *www.ctre.iastate.edu/ Outreach/ltap/ library/search.cfm.*

Stan Ring

The library also provides a free referral service. For help finding information on specific transportation-related subjects or for help with a special library search, or to request a library catalog, contact Stan Ring, library coordinator.

Stan Ring
515-294-9481
sring@iastate.edu

Safety circuit rider

IOWA'S Safety Circuit Rider Tom McDonald makes safety training accessible by taking it directly to the agency when possible.

Regularly offered training includes

- ▼ professional flagging work-shops: the Principles of Flagging and the Certified Flagger
- ▼ work zone safety
- ▼ excavation safety
- ▼ roadside safety
- ▼ backhoe safety
- ▼ traffic control devices and markings

For more information about safety training, contact Tom McDonald, safety circuit rider.

Tom McDonald
515-294-6384
tmcdonal@iastate.edu

Tom McDonald

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CTRE Services

Practical products and services

Iowa's pavement management program

CTRE has been working with the Iowa Department of Transportation since 1995 to develop and implement the Iowa Pavement Management Program (IPMP).

The IPMP covers federal-aid-eligible, non-National Highway System roads under state, city, and county jurisdictions. However, CTRE can extend these services to your other paved highways.

THE IOWA Pavement Management Program (IPMP) helps state and local transportation agencies make better decisions about how to spend their maintenance and construction dollars.

The IPMP consists of (1) information on pavement conditions and (2) a supporting database for analyzing the condition data. The database includes state-of-the-art geographic referencing tools and built-in analysis software.

CTRE provides local and regional agencies with automated distress data collection services, IPMP database software and support, and training workshops.

Automated distress data collection

If your agency chooses to participate in Iowa's pavement management program, CTRE can collect pavement distress data for your paved highways (data are collected by an automated system through CTRE's contractor, Roadware). There is a nominal fee to collect data for roads that are not part of the federal-aid system: $40 per mile for county (rural) roads and $55 per mile for city (urban) roads.

Pavement management software

Pavement distress data and the supporting GIS/analysis database form the framework of this program. The final, critical component is a decision-support tool, or pavement management software. This software takes data analysis a step farther, providing management assistance to agencies by making recommendations regarding roadway maintenance, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

The IPMP uses dTIMS (Deighton Total Infrastructure Management System) as its pavement management software. When cities and counties purchase dTIMS, CTRE provides technical support and pavement management data. A copy of dTIMS costs $500 with a $650 annual maintenance and update fee.

Training workshops

Pilot training workshops will be offered in the spring of 2000. Future workshops will be scheduled based on requests from local governmental agencies and the Iowa DOT.

▼ Fundamentals of Pavement Management Systems: defines pavement management systems and explains why they are used.

▼ GIS Database: provides technical training on the IPMP GIS database tools and information delivery tools.

▼ Pavement Management Software: provides technical training on the selected IPMP pavement management software tool, dTIMS, and includes software implementation, customization, and demonstrations.

For more information about any of the IPMP services, contact Omar Smadi, pavement management specialist.

Omar Smadi
515-294-7110
smadi@iastate.edu

The IPMP team can help you with software training and support. Team members include, from left to right, Zach Hans, Aemal Khattak, and Omar Smadi (team leader).
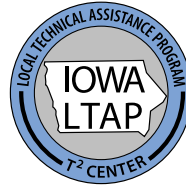
Practical portland cement concrete research

TRAINING, technology transfer, and applied research—that's the focus of the new Center for Portland Cement Concrete Pavement Technology. Early projects will include

▼ compiling PCC technology reference materials

▼ developing a PCC pavement technology clearinghouse with Internet capabilities for requesting and downloading materials

▼ publishing a PCC pavement technology newsletter

▼ identifying high-priority topics for research

▼ developing training programs on PCC pavement design, construction, and quality control and assurance

A new director for the center will be on board at CTRE soon, and initial materials

will be available summer 2000.

In the meantime, for more information contact CTRE Director Stephen Andrle.

Stephen Andrle
515-294-8103
andrle@iastate.edu
www.ctre.iastate.edu/ pcc

Applied research and training are top priorities of the new Center for Portland Cement Concrete Pavement Technology.

Iowa Traffic Safety Data Service (ITSDS)

NEED quick access to recent crash facts? Want to display that information in meaningful, graphical formats for presentations to your city council, county supervisors, or the public? Help's available!

The ITSDS is a new quick-response service that provides easy-to-understand analy-

ses and reports from many traffic safety and geographic information systems tools developed by the Iowa Department of Transportation.

The ITSDS provides standard jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction reports of crash facts, which will soon be available online. The ITSDS is also beginning to

take requests for specific crash reports.

For more information about the ITSDS or to make a request, contact Jerry Roche, research assistant.

Jerry Roche
515-294-5004
itsds@iastate.edu
www.ctre.iastate.edu/ itsds/

Jerry Roche will create crash fact reports, tables, and maps to help you make more effective public presentations on safety issues.

CTRE Services

More training opportunities

New training facilities

CTRE will be developing many more training workshops and programs for local transportation agencies now that we have two new training facilities.

Computer training lab

The computer training lab can accommodate up to 40 participants who share 20 computers.

Duane Smith

Video conferencing room

The video conferencing room, which also seats 40, will greatly enhance our ability to conduct long-distance training and meetings.

Workshops

Workshops are currently being developed for software-related training in

▼ MicroStation
▼ highway capacity
▼ intelligent transportation systems

Workshop information will be available on CTRE's online conference calendar. You may also contact Duane Smith, associate director for outreach, about training programs he's developing.

Duane Smith
515-294-8103
desmith@iastate.edu
www.ctre.iastate.edu/ Outreach/ conferences.cfm.

Your training needs

The computer training lab and the video conferencing room will also be available for local agencies to use for their own training needs. For more information about facility fees and scheduling, contact Traci Stewart, CTRE's receptionist.

Traci Stewart
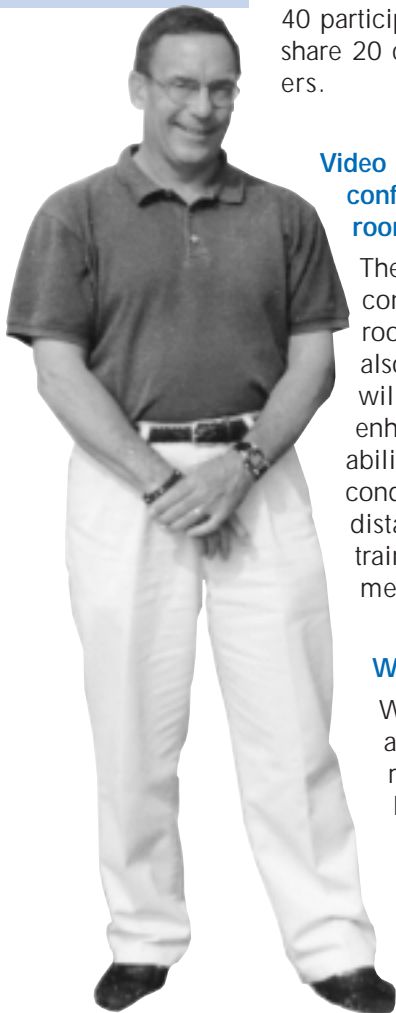515-294-8103
stewartt@iastate.edu

CTRE's computer training lab can accommodate up to 40 students.

Traci Stewart

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Have you seen these web resources?

www.dot.state.ia.us/wzcrash.htm
Check out the Iowa Department of Transportation's Work Zone Safety page.

aben.cals.cornell.edu/localroads/intro.htm
This online flagger and work zone safety tutorial is a helpful initial training course for new construction and maintenance staff. Some of the information applies only to New York.

www.tfhrc.gov/hnr20/recycle/waste/
This site provides an electronic version of "User Guidelines for Waste and Byproduct Materials in Pavement Construction," a manual promoting appropriate uses for waste materials generated during highway construction. It was developed by the Turner Fairbank Highway Research Center.

www.rmrc.unh.edu/
The Recycled Maaterials Resource Center at the University of New Hampshire, funded by TEA-21, serves as a clearinghouse of information about using recycled materials in roadway construction and maintenance.

www.hsrc.unc.edu/oldhsrc/research/pedbike/bci/index.html
Read about the Bicycle Compatibility Index (BCI), the Federal Highway Administration's new tool to help you evaluate an existing road or plan a new road to insure a desired level of service for bicyclists. You can also download the BCI workbook in Microsoft Excel format. The research was conducted and workbook developed by the University of North Carolina's Highway Safety Research Center.

www.bicyclinginfo.org/
More bicycling—and pedestrian—information from the University of North Carolina's Highway Safety Research Center. This site showcases resources coming soon through UNC's new Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center; bookmark it and come back later.

safety.fhwa.dot.gov/rumblestrips/
Rumble strips installed on roadway shoulders could dramatically reduce the number of run-off-road crashes. Get more information, a list of providers, and expert advice, or participate in a discussion group specifically about rumble strips on two-lane rural highways, at this site.

www.naBRO.unl.edu/
The National Bridge Research Organization's web site contains information on innovative bridge technology and online versions of the NBRO's newsletter, *Bridge Talk*. NBRO is at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

www.dot.state.ia.us/aviation/index.htm
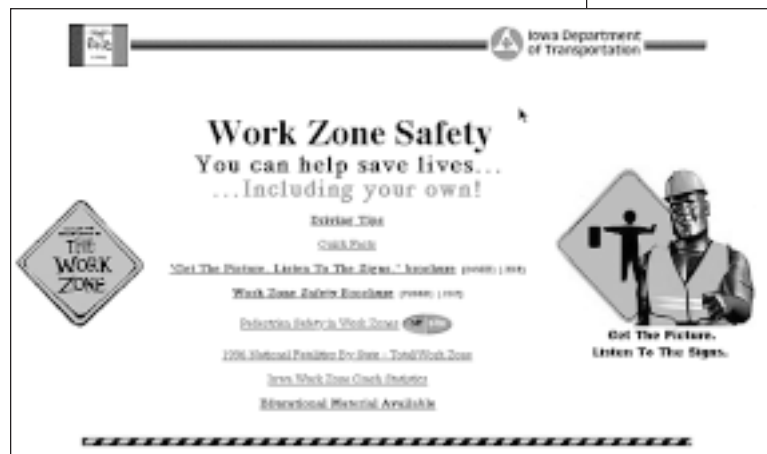The Iowa Department of Transportation's aviation web page includes an Iowa airport map, information for pilots, and other information.
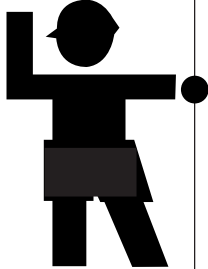
www.dot.state.ia.us/sitemap.htm
Click on "Newsletters" to access the Iowa Aviation Bulletin, published by the Iowa Department of Transportation. •
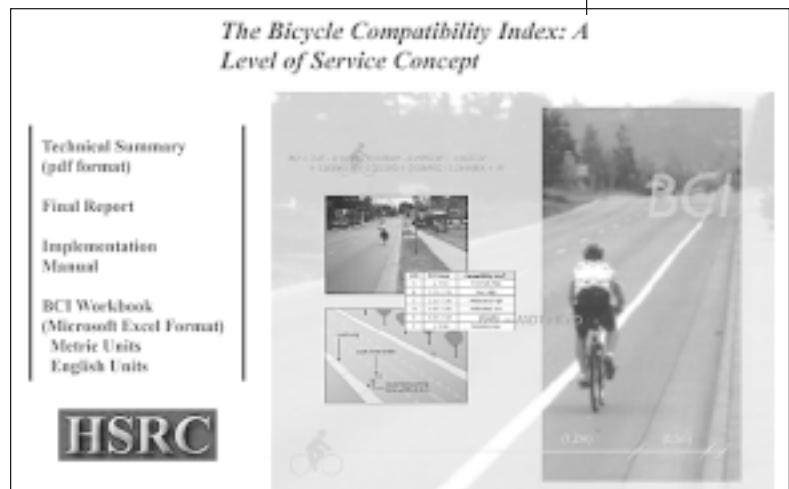
www.hsrc.unc.edu/oldhsrc/research/pedbike/bci/index.html

www.dot.state.ia.us/wzcrash.htm

Proposed rules
for traffic control on low volume roads

Iowa's county governments should be especially interested in the proposed Part 5 of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD). For the first time the MUTCD is devoting a separate section of the manual to traffic control on rural, low volume roads.

This brief but important section of the MUTCD proposes

• options for deploying traffic control devices on low volume rural roads

• a shoulder offset option on low volume rural roads

• criteria to supplement warrant criteria guiding the installation of stop and yield signs on low volume rural roads

• a new NO TRAFFIC SIGNS warning sign for optional use on Category 1 roads

• additional criteria for considering centerline installation on Category 3 roads

The proposed Part 5 was published December 21, 1999 (FHWA Docket No. FHWA-99-6298), in the *Federal Register.* Comments are due by June 30. If you're involved with traffic control on rural roads, we urge you to review the proposal thoroughly and provide your comments. The final rule-making will consider all input.

Signed, written comments referring to the docket number must be submitted to

Docket Clerk
U.S. DOT Dockets
Room PL-401
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590-0001

You may also be interested in reviewing proposed Part 6, Traffic Control for Work Zones, published in the *Federal Register* December 30, 1999 (FHWA Docket No. FHWA-99-6576).

All other proposed parts have been published; however, notices of proposed update information for Parts 1 (General Provisions), 3 (Markings), 4 (Signals), and 8 (Traffic Control at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings) have only recently been published. Comments on proposed Parts 5 and 6 and these updates are due by June 30, and the FHWA will prepare a final rule position in December 2000.

Federal Register notices and the proposed texts are available on the *Federal Register* home page, www.nara.gov/fedreg. Click on Federal Register, then complete the search form by clicking on 1999 Federal Register, Proposed Rules, Issue Date (type the date mm/dd/yy), and Search Terms (e.g., Traffic Control).

The proposed texts will soon be available on the MUTCD's home page, www.fhwa.dot.gov/operations/mutcd, with an overview of the proposed changes to the MUTCD and a database management program that can be used to research various requests for changes in the MUTCD.

Since 1995 the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has been completely rewriting and reformatting the MUTCD, the first such effort in more than 20 years. The Millennium MUTCD will be published in 2001 in both hard copy and electronic format (CD-ROM and the Internet).

For more information contact Safety Circuit Rider Tom McDonald, 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu. •

Make every week
"Work Zone Safety Week"

IN 1998, nearly 37,000 people were injured in work zones. In the last decade, more than 8,000 people died from work zone-related accidents, at least 52 of them in Iowa and at least five on Iowa's city or county roads.*

To call public attention to these grim facts and encourage safe driving in work zones, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA), and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) have designated April 3–7, 2000, "Work Zone Safety Week" (WZSW).

You can make this national focus even more effective by making it a *local* campaign as well. Here are a few suggestions:

Increase public awareness in your city or county
Work Zone Safety Week will kick off with a press conference in a Washington, D.C. metropolitan work zone. You can stage a similar event when you have a work zone set up on a busy street or county road. Local reporters and photographers wearing hard hats and safety vests will quickly develop an appreciation of the dangers workers face when separated from fast-moving traffic by only light barricades. Having experienced this situation themselves, reporters are likely to pass the information on to the public—with fervor!

The national WZSW partners will also distribute to the national media a list of tips to motorists for driving safely through work zones. These tips include

• Slow down. Follow work zone speed limits.

• Give complete attention to the road.

• Stop distracting activities, like eating, changing radio stations, or using a cell phone.

• Pay close attention to merge signs and flaggers.

• Watch out for workers and their equipment.

• Turn on headlights to be more visible to workers.

You may want to tailor this list for your jurisdiction and hand it out to the media at your work zone demonstration. Or send the list as part of a news release to local media. (For refresher information about preparing news releases and working with the media, see the online public relations publication *Get the Word Out*, www.ctre.iastate.edu/pubs/; click

on "tips on public relations" under Special Publications.)

Along with the national WZSW sponsors, become a public advertisement for work zone safety: By displaying orange ribbons on your work and personal vehicles, you and your staff will generate opportunities to answer questions from your constituents. The ribbons serve as reminders to motorists to drive safely in work zones and as memorials to people who have been killed or injured in work zones. Pass ribbons out at council and supervisor meetings, driver education classes, and speaking engagements.

Make work zone safety a priority in your shop
Review your agency's work zone practices and equipment. Does your safety apparel meet the new MUTCD standards for conspicuity? Do your staff always wear safety apparel, including hardhats, in work zones? Do they always set up advance signs, even in mobile or short-term work zones?

Train, train, and train some more. New employees and those who've been around awhile will be enlightened and inspired by participating in short courses on safe work zone practices. Iowa's Safety Circuit Rider can bring a flagger training or flagger certification course right to your shop. And Work Zone Safety Workshops for city, county, Iowa DOT, and construction personnel are being conducted right now, through March, at several locations around the state.

For information about any of these training programs, contact Safety Circuit Rider Tom McDonald, 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu. The Work Zone Safety Workshop registration brochure is online at www.ctre.iastate.edu/. See the item under "CTRE News."

For more information
The Iowa Department of Transportation posts helpful information about work zone safety at www.dot.state.ia.us/wzcrash.htm. During the construction season the Iowa DOT web site includes maps of state work zones, with detailed information for motorists; see www.dot.state.ia.us/roadcons.htm.

Also check out the National Work Zone Safety Clearinghouse, wzsafety.tamu.edu/, which includes a searchable database of best work zone practices.

*Iowa work zone fatality figures are not available for 1998–1999. •

"Local reporters and photographers wearing hard hats and safety vests will quickly develop an appreciation of the dangers workers face when separated from fast-moving traffic by only light barricades."

Library news
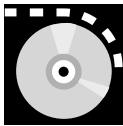
IN ADDITION to the new videos and publications below, four of our CD-I players are currently available for two- to three-month loans. Popular CDs are also available including *Snow and Ice Control, Motor Grader Operations,* and *Management Training.*

V590 *The Other Side of the Barrel.* This 10-minute video describes work zone safety features and what they should mean to the motorist. It describes the various driver distractions and emotions that can lead to accidents. Through examples and illustrations it provides an excellent overview of the problems of high speed and distractions and urges drivers to slow down and be alert.

V587 *Road Rage.* Road rage is a dangerous problem and a factor in many traffic accidents. This five-minute video helps explain how it develops and how to avoid road rage situations where you might get involved in a life threatening situation.

V599 and V600 *What to Expect When You're Inspecting: Part I and Part II.* These 20-minute videos contain on-site interviews with actual inspectors, field engineers, and quality control technicians. Part I covers pre-construction meetings, problem sub-grades, acceptable form work, and reinforcing. Part II covers what to check for in placement, wrong mix delivered or out-of-spec concrete, suitable consolidation, time to finish, and adding water on site.

V612 *Pulling Trailers.* Towing a trailer of any type is a big responsibility and safe procedures need to be followed. This video explains start-up procedures, connection requirements, and a general checklist of preparation activities. It gives driving tips with an emphasis on safety.

V606–610 *Excavator Operation Fundamentals.* Each 12-minute video in this series covers a separate topic including trench digging, trench servicing and backfilling, loading haul units, and benching and backsloping.

V613 *Computeritis: The High Tech Hazard.* A typist may strike the computer keys as many as 12,000 times in an hour, and do this for many hours. This repeated action can cause carpal tunnel syndrome and require surgery. This video shows how to counteract the problem with tips on proper typing techniques.

P1441 *Earth Retaining Systems.* This publication presents information on temporary and permanent earth retaining systems for use on highway projects.

P1445 *Minnesota Seal Coat Handbook.* This handbook provides a background in seal coat materials, equipment, design, and construction for the field inspector.

P1438 *Traffic Calming, State of the Practice.* This report discusses and explains the various measures used to reduce the speed and volume of traffic to an acceptable level for the functional class of street and the nature of the border activity. It uses illustrations from many US cities.

Ordering materials

In each issue of *Technology News* we provide brief notes about a few of our recent acquisitions to Iowa's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) library. The complete LTAP library catalog is online at *www.ctre.iastate.edu/Outreach/ltap/library/search.cfm.* You can search the library and order items online.

You can also order any of the items mentioned in this article and/or a hard copy of the complete LTAP library catalog by using the form on the back page of this newsletter.

If you have questions about the library's holdings, please contact Stan Ring, library coordinator, at 515-294-9481. •

**Stan Ring,
LTAP library coordinator**

Training tip

Need to bone up on job safety training? Stan Ring, CTRE's library coordinator, can print abstracts for the over 150 videos and publications about job safety and then help you set up a monthly training schedule. Contact Stan at 515-294-9481, sring@iastate.edu.

February 2000

| 28 | Work Zone Safety Workshop | Mason City | Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu |
| 29 | Work Zone Safety Workshop | Mason City | Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu |

March 2000

1	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Storm Lake	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
10	2000 Geotechnical Conference	Williamsburg	ISU Extended and Continuing Educ. 800-262-0015
13	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
14	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Council Bluffs	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
15	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Council Bluffs	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
16	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Sioux City	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
20	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
20	Excavation Safety Workshop	Iowa City	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
21	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
22	Work Zone Safety Workshop	Iowa City	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
22–24	ISAC Spring School of Instruction	Des Moines	Jim Cable 515-294-2862, jkcable@iastate.edu
23	Excavation Safety Workshop	Carroll	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
23–24	Iowa DOT Annual Conference	Ames	Jim Cable 515-294-2862, jkcable@iastate.edu
24	Excavation Safety Workshop	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
29	Pavement Markings Conference	Ames	Tom McDonald 515-294-6384, tmcdonal@iastate.edu
29–30	Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau Conference	Council Bluffs	Duane Smith 515-294-8103, desmith@iastate.edu
30–31	APWA Iowa Chapter Spring Conference	Ames	Duane Smith 515-294-8103, desmith@iastate.edu

April 2000

| 16–20 | NACE 2000 Annual Meeting and Technical Management Conference | Overland Park, Kansas | Duane Smith 515-294-8103, desmith@iastate.edu |

May 2000

15–16	Mid-Continent Transportation Symposium	Ames	Sharon Prochnow 515-294-3781, prochnow@iastate.edu
17	Introduction to Roundabouts	Ames	Sharon Prochnow 515-294-3781, prochnow@iastate.edu
18	ITCSA Spring Conference	Ames	Duane Smith 515-294-8103, desmith@iastate.edu

Iowa to host transportation symposium and roundabouts workshop

A FEW hundred transportation professionals from the Midwest and beyond will descend on Iowa for the Mid-Continent Transportation Symposium during National Transportation Week 2000. The symposium offers a unique opportunity for Iowa's local transportation professionals to participate in a national research conference right in their own backyard.

The Iowa Department of Transportation is cosponsoring the symposium. The event will also serve as the annual conference for the Missouri Valley Section of the Institute for Transportation Engineers (MOVITE).

This year, a one-day workshop on roundabouts will follow the two-day symposium. Attendees can register for the symposium only, the roundabouts workshop only, or—for a special price—both events.

More information is available at www.ctre.iastate.edu/. The registration brochure will be online at this site by the end of February. •

Update your address/order library materials

To make a change to the *Technology News* mail list or to order library materials, please complete the information at right and mail this *entire page* (including mail label) to CTRE's address below.

Thank you!

☐ Please *add* the following name/address to the *Technology News* mail list.

☐ Please *correct* the name and/or address below on the *Technology News* mail list.

New or corrected mailing information:

Name _____

Title _____

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Organization _____

☐ Please delete the name/address below from the *Technology News* mail list.

☐ Please send the following library materials to the address below (or the corrected address above) (when ordering, include publication or video *title* and *number*): _____

_____

_____

☐ Plese send a complete library catalog to the address below (or the corrected address above).