INSIDE *ITS*

Intelligent Transportation Systems Update for North America

TRAVELER INFORMATION

Trips123 may finally launch in NY metro area

$18 million advanced traveler information model deployment is seven years late but program manager still sees it as a showcase for the industry. TransitAdvisor component is integrating data from what will be more than 60 transit systems and helping to develop standards for doing so. Participating agencies see Trips123 as a groundbreaking customer service.

Partners in Trips123, the $18 million advanced traveler information system in the New York metropolitan region that was funded in 1996 to be part of an ITS metropolitan model deployment showcase, are expecting to formally launch the long-delayed system and begin a public outreach campaign.

Trips123 comprises a Transit-Advisor, a regional, multi-agency trip planning system; traffic information; and a fee-based Personalized Traveler Services (PTS). The first two components are up and running on the Trips123 website; the commercial service is under development as this issue goes to press.

The partners have not decided

GOVERNMENT WATCH

House unites to overwhelmingly approve a $284B transportation reauthorization

Senate committees move along a Senate bill with the same price tag. The $284 billion total matches the administration's offer, but the White House threatens a veto if the final bill can be reopened for additional funding next year. House bill retains ITS provisions from last year's bill, including a congestion relief program, a $2.5 billion ITS deployment program, and a research program.

The U.S. House of Representatives approved a $284 billion, six-year surface transportation authorization bill last month by a vote of 417 to 9. The funding level matches that offered by the administration in its recent fiscal year 2006 budget request (see *Inside ITS* Online, March 1, 2005).

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee approved the highway portion of a $284 billion Senate bill and the Senate Banking Committee approved the transit portion as this issue went to press. But the Associated Press reports that senators from both sides of the aisle want to add more money. Senator Max Baucus, the ranking Democrat on the Finance Committee, said, "We will find additional funding" before the bill is considered by the full Senate.

Other Senate committees are scheduled to mark up their portions of the bill after the Easter recess, and the bill is expected to arrive on the Senate floor sometime during the last two weeks of April, according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

The current transportation autho-rization, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21),

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The **Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation** has created a new website with links to multiple information resources, including the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, the Boston-area SmarTraveler service, and others. Media coverage of the new resource highlighted the ability of citizens to search for information about road construction projects by clicking on MassHighway and then on Projects (www.eot.state.ma.us).

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation and partners are testing a website that reports adverse road conditions on Highway 2 and in the cities of Calgary and Edmonton. The site, called Alberta Traveller Information, is based on the condition acquisition and reporting system (CARS) and includes traffic cameras views from Calgary. Users are asked to complete an online survey for feedback to the site developers. Partners are the City of Calgary, the City of Edmonton, and the Alberta Motor Association; Transport Canada is contributing funds for the project (www.travelinfotest. ab.ca).

The **Transportation Research Board** is sponsoring the 12th International High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Conference on April 18–20 in Houston, Texas. The conference theme focuses on HOV systems, managed lanes, and pricing: strategies for improving metropolitan mobility and accessibility. For more information visit www.trb.org/ conferences/hov or contact Rich Cunard, rcunard@nas.edu, +1 202 334 2963.

Talking Operations Web Seminars in the next two months are Transportation Performance Measures that the Public Can Understand on April 27 and Transportation System Management — a Primer for Elected Officials on May 25. For more information, visit http://talking-operations.webex.com or contact Zia Burleigh, zia.burleigh@fhwa.dot.gov, +1 202 366 1896.

Upcoming Talking Freight Web Seminars include Freight Transportation and Air Quality on April 20 and Linking Freight with Context Sensitive Design on May 18. For more information, visit http://talkingfreight. webex.com or contact Jennifer Seplow, +1 703 676 6849, jennifer.e. seplow@saic.com.

ITS Canada is soliciting applications for its Michel Van Aerde Memorial Scholarship for graduate studies in ITS at any Canadian university. Visit www.itscanada.ca or contact ITS Canada at +1 905 294 1050, itscanada@itscanada.ca.

The **Council of University Transportation Centers** has renamed its Non-Thesis Masters Degree Award in honor of Neville Parker, director of the City University of New York Institute for Transportation Systems (CUNY ITS) and the Kayser Professor of Civil Engineering at The City College of New York (www-ce.engr. ccny.cuny.edu/research/transportation_systems.htm).

Mississippi State University's Center for Advanced Vehicular Systems is testing a bus-tracking system that will allow students to access bus arrival times along university routes. "In the future, the system will feature an automated voice dial-up capability," says Georgios Lazarou, the project's principal investigator. "Students will be able to access the system by laptop or cell phone, check the location of a bus, ask the estimated arrival time at a particular stop, and get a voice response in real time." Information about the project is available at www.bullybus.msstate.edu.

The **ITS Benefit of the Month for March** highlights the Greater Yellowstone Weather and Traveler Information System, a regional 511 travel information system in Montana. The service consolidated two existing road weather information phone services and overall customer satisfaction ratings increased to 81 percent from 71 percent (www.benefitcost.its. dot.gov).

Econolite, in Anaheim, Calif., is introducing the next generation of its line of advanced system controllers. The ASC/3 Series is compliant with National Electronics Manufacturers Association (NEMA) TS2 and National Transportation Communications for ITS Protocol (NTCIP) standards (www.econolite.com).

NTT DoCoMo, East Japan Railway Co., and Sony Corp., have announced that they will launch a service on Jan. 1, 2006, that will allow travelers to pay for train trips using new mobile phones, Reuters reports. Sony's FeliCa smart chip is embedded in the phone, which is called a "wallet phone," and the phones will be passed over a scanner to allow access to trains at ticket gates. About 2 million of DoCoMo's 48 million customers currently own wallet phones and DoCoMo expects to have 10 million wallet phones in use in by March 2006.

Wherify Wireless, in Redwood Shores, Calif., and ModeLabs, based in Paris, have announced that they will partner to offer Wherify's location-based services technology and the Wherifone G550 Locator Phone to wireless operators and subscribers in France. Wherify Wireless introduced the Wherifone G550