We, as the collective traffic engineering industry, must be aware that our peer review efforts are as much a reflection of us and our industry as a whole, as they are about our counterparts’ efforts.

As a transportation professional working for both private- and public-sector entities for more than 17 years, primarily in the greater New England area, I have seen a wide range of approaches to conducting peer review efforts. Some are detailed while others are broad; some adhere to strict transportation engineering guidelines, while others seem to protect client interests first. The objective of this article is not to highlight the differences in how people and companies conduct peer review efforts. The objective is to more fully examine this important aspect of our practice.

As I prepared this article, I shared my thoughts with many of my peers in the industry and asked for their thoughts on how we, as an industry, address peer review assignments. As I discovered, there are points on which some can agree, and some on which there are diametrically opposed viewpoints.

**Why Peer Review?**

Ultimately, the peer review process is in place to provide communities and clients more clarity and certainty that relevant and pertinent issues have been reviewed and considered in a fair and equitable manner. It allows input to the approaches being used, highlights issues that might not have been normally considered through a more traditional engineering effort, and can many times make a good project better.

The primary role of a peer reviewer is to review the information presented and offer an opinion with respect to its validity. By having an expert in the field comment on the validity of the information presented, the process becomes more transparent to the general public and, in many cases, a more focused dialogue can occur.

There are different motivations for conducting peer review efforts. Some conduct reviews on behalf of the communities they serve. In many cases, communities do not have the resources to evaluate, elaborate, and comment on the technical reports presented to them. For example, within 31 MetroWest communities of the Greater Boston area, only one community – Framingham – has a designated staff person with the responsibility of focusing on transportation-related issues. Many other communities utilize in-town staff to assist in the review of traffic studies while others rely on consultants to review the more detailed and technical studies. Often, these studies are for complex projects involving the potential for significant impacts to their host communities. The peer reviewer, in these cases, essentially serves as an extension of the municipal staff.

In other cases, interested stakeholders concerned about a project’s potential impacts hire consultants to serve as resident experts, keeping a specific focus on their concerns. It is clear that these concerns may not reflect the community as a whole, but instead personal interests or land holdings.

**What’s Wrong with Peer Review?**

Transportation engineering is a science; albeit, one that can be influenced heavily by opinion. The ways in which differences of individual professional opinion are portrayed to the general public is where most peer review efforts shift from a fact-based review to an opinion-based argument. Many of the consultants with whom I spoke alleged that individual’s personal views of transportation engineering are the single largest hurdle in getting projects properly reviewed. Many agree, however, that the majority of the consultant community is fair and ethical in their role as peer reviewers.

One of the larger complaints I discovered was when an interested business owner or continued on page 4
A Message from the President

John Mirabito

Where does the time go? We are already halfway through May; I do not know if it was ever spring in New England, and our thoughts will soon turn to summer and vacation. It has been an eventful 4 ½ months for NEITE, too. In April, we held the annual NE/CTITE joint meeting in Manchester, CT. The meeting included a presentation by newly appointed CONNDot Commissioner Ralph Carpenter, and the election of new officers for the CT Chapter. I would like to thank outgoing President, Roger Krahn for his excellent work and I look forward to working with incoming President, Mark Vertucci and the other new officers.

At the April meeting, we conducted a strategic planning retreat. Last year, the Board decided to develop a strategic plan for NEITE, with the goal of producing an NEITE action plan. At the retreat, we met with our facilitator, Peg Kelly, for an energetic, half-day session. The first task was a SWOT analysis that helped us identify what we do well and what we do not. We produced a mission statement for NEITE and identified three groups that NEITE serves: members, the profession, and the public. We developed a list of action items for each of the three groups. After the retreat, a smaller group prioritized the list for presentation to the Board at our June meeting. We also identified some items that will be implemented at or before the meeting.

The retreat was a success. It provided the Board a chance to look at what NEITE should focus on in the future and how to get there. These broader issues can be difficult to adequately address while dealing with the smaller, time sensitive issues that fill our days. We are now in the implementation phase of the process, where the action items will be brought to life over the next few years. I will give you more details on the plan in subsequent issues of the Chronicle and publish the entire document on the NEITE website, www.neite.org.

I received some disappointing news when Joe Segale decided to resign as NEITE Treasurer. Joe will be leaving his job as a “planenieer” and will be working as a project manager for a developer in Burlington, VT. Unfortunately, this career change will not permit him to dedicate the necessary time to NEITE. Joe’s hard work and unique perspective will be missed by the Section. After consulting several current and past Board members it was decided to elevate Mike Knodler to Treasurer (from Senior Director) and Kevin Dandrade to Senior Director (from Junior Director); and elect Jennifer Conley to Junior Director. Jennifer is currently the Student Chapter Liaison and the president of Conley Associates, in VT. In accordance with our by-laws, the Executive Board elected the new officer/directors. I welcome Jennifer to the Board, and thank everyone for their flexibility and commitment to ITE.

We have been touting it what seems like a long time and now we can say the District 1 Meeting, in Providence, RI, was a huge success. The meeting was held May 9 – 11 at the Biltmore hotel and was attended by more than 170 people. The theme for the technical program, “Innovative and Flexible Design Solutions,” was timely and appropriate as older cities like Providence reinvent themselves. There were several social activities at the meeting, including a welcome reception at the Federal Reserve (including a traffic signal ice sculpture); a tour of Newport; the Traffic Bowl; the annual banquet highlighted by the Ocean State Follies; and a golf outing. The Local Arrangements Committee, co-chaired by Frank Romeo and Gary Hebert did a great job. The banquet featured a tribute to Harvey Bouwell, Mr. ITE District 1, and the District awards. NEITE won the Outstanding Section Award for our accomplishments during 2005. This award is due to the outstanding leadership by Neil Boudreau, last year’s president, and the hard work of the entire section. Congratulations!

Earl Newman (International President) and Rodney Kelly and Kenneth Voigt (International Vice President Candidates) each made presentations at the meeting. NEITE was founded 60 years ago at the International Board of Direction meeting in 1947 in Detroit, MI. Earl Newman presented NEITE with a resolution to commemorate this anniversary. We are always grateful when our international leaders can attend meetings.

Rod and Ken’s election brochures are in this issue. I ask that you read the candidates’ statements and chose your next International Vice President later this year. Kim Hazavartian’s three-year term as International Director will be ending this year and District 1 will be electing his successor. Based on a rotation among the three Sections in the District, this year’s candidates, Michael O’Rourke and Lynn LaMunyon, will come from the MET Section. All of the candidates for international office have pledged a substantial amount of their time and effort to ITE over the next three years. Please, remember their dedication when ballots come out and vote. With the advent of web-based voting, your part takes only minutes.

Our next meeting will be the Joint ME/NH/NEITE Meeting on June 21. The meeting will be held at the York Harbor Inn in York, Maine. This will be a new meeting venue for NEITE and I hope to see you there. The meeting details are included in the Chronicle.

Enjoy that summer vacation. You earned it!
Sound Off!
This issue’s feature article, “State of the Practice: Peer Review,” on page 1, summarizes the author’s thoughts on the peer review process in our industry. What are your thoughts on our industry’s peer review practice?

Go to www.neite.org/index2.shtml and let us know in the Sound Off! section. Subsequent Chronicle issues will highlight the more provocative results, along with another Sound Off! topic. If you have any comments or suggestions for a future Sound Off! topic, e-mail chronicle@vhb.com.

NEITE Chronicle Update
Last issue, you noticed that we are trying to push to an all (or mostly) electronic distribution. We asked that you update your mailing information (both postal and electronic) to ensure timely delivery. We also sent out a letter to our members for whom we did not have e-mail addresses. We kindly ask that you remind our members who have not received an electronic version of The Chronicle to consider adding their information to the ITE database.

Many of you wrote to me indicating your preferred e-mail address, but have not updated it with ITE. We request a new list from ITE each mailing to ensure the most up-to-date list is being used. To receive the issues electronically, you need to ensure that ITE has your current e-mail address information.

Please take a moment and provide ITE with your e-mail address if you haven’t yet.

• Go to www.ite.org and click ‘Login’ on the left.
• Your ‘Login’ is your ITE member number, and your ‘Password’ is the first six letters of your last name.
• From there, click the gray ‘Edit’ button at the top of that page to edit/add information.

As in the past, we will request a new section list from www.ite.org prior to the next mailing.

A Message from the Editor
VHB received some great feedback from its first crack at the newsletter. Overall, most of it was positive. We have attempted to incorporate some of the constructive feedback, too, starting with this issue. We hope you like it and consider dropping us a line at chronicle@vhb.com to let us know if you do (or even if you don’t!).

VHB’s contributing staff:
Alan Belniak Matt Kealey
Matt Blume Juliet Locke
Matt Chase Julie Murphy
Alan Cloutier Rob Nagi
Terri Courtemarche Jorge Quinones
Joe Herr Nick Sanders

Useful Links
Institute of Transportation Engineers http://www.ite.org
American Society of Civil Engineers http://www.asce.org
American Society of Civil Engineers (New Hampshire Chapter) http://www.ascenh.org
American Society of Civil Engineers (Vermont Section Chapter) http://sections.asce.org/vermont
American Society of Civil Engineers (Maine Section Chapter) http://www.maineasce.org/main.htm
American Society of Civil Engineers (Connecticut Section) http://www.csce.org/
Urban Land Institute http://www.uli.org

The American Planning Association (Northern New England Chapter) http://www.nnecapa.org
The American Planning Association (Massachusetts Chapter) http://www.massapa.org
The American Planning Association (Connecticut Chapter) http://www.ccapa.org
property owner hires their own consultant to conduct a focused review of the work of another consultant. In many of these cases, the reviewing consultant is asked to render an opinion with respect to the likelihood of the project having a negative impact on their property or business. For an abutting opponent to a project, any impact can be misrepresented as a negative impact. Moreover, when the abuting property owner could potentially become a competitor, the issue of conflict clearly arises. This situation can be damaging to the transportation engineering profession. Having multiple transportation engineers debating – in public – the merits of a traffic study, clouds the real issues and builds mistrust in the traffic engineering community as a whole. To this, I suggest that all ITE engineers re-read the ITE Canons of Ethics for Members.

Another complaint I discovered is the blurry line of where the peer reviewer’s role begins and ends. Some noted that the peer reviewer’s role was to review specifically what was assigned to them and not to stray from that material or identify new issues, unless new issues were raised by the agencies or regulatory boards for whom they were working. Others noted that the expectation is that the peer reviewer comment on all transportation-related issues, whether in the documents being reviewed or as part of a more traditional review effort. Most of the municipal officials interviewed assumed a peer reviewer would offer an opinion if there were a better solution worth considering.

An example of this included a discussion I had with a two consultants who felt they had both been wronged by the peer review process: one an author of a study, the other a consultant hired by a planning board to conduct a peer review of the project. After three or four meetings, most vehicular traffic issues were reviewed and agreed upon. The peer reviewer made an additional request for information relating to the need for pedestrian accommodations and in turn, created a significant hardship between the two parties that led to distrust between them which, was evident in my discussions with each of them even today (five years later).

From the peer reviewer’s perspective, it was felt that this issue was an obvious extension of his role as a reviewer. Certainly, the original scope was developed to review the traffic study. But in the mind of the reviewer, it also included a review of what was not printed in the report. My conversation discovered that the issue arose after the reviewer had taken the time to conduct a site visit and see the pedestrian activity in the area and noted that the infrastructure was inadequate. The comment related to safe pedestrian accommodations and in turn, created a significant hardship between the two parties that led to distrust between them which, was evident in my discussions with each of them even today (five years later).

What Does Poor Peer Review Mean to the Transportation Engineering Profession?

If two transportation professionals openly disagree in front of a municipal agency (and more importantly, the general public) about what might be considered trivial matters, any trust between the public and the transportation engineering community is quickly reduced or eliminated. The argument suggests and perpetuates the common notion that the transportation engineering community is a ‘hocus-pocus’ industry and that anyone can be a transportation expert.

That said, disagreements and arguments can be good for a project and for the industry. Sometimes, transportation professionals arrive at different answers to the same question for very valid reasons. However, how we portray those disagreements – especially to the general public – reflects on all of us.

For example, it is common for two engineers to examine ITE Trip Generation and disagree on the number of trips to be generated by a specific project (which land use code? average rates or the regression equation? peak hour of the adjacent street or generator?). Further, other items can be legitimately approached differently (amount of pass-by traffic? amount of diverted-link traffic? distribution and assignment of new traffic?). Invariably, there will be as many answers as there are transportation professionals. In my conversations with other peers, it seems that this is accepted, so long as the differences are minor in nature. However, a more important issue remains: how is this difference of opinion relayed to the general public? Does the peer reviewer discuss, line by line, the differences in the approaches? This could inject doubt into the author’s approach and methodology over minor differences. Or, does the reviewer simply highlight that there are differences in opinions, but the end result is insignificant? This could inject doubt with respect to the level of review actually conducted.

A personal example of mine focused around the need for pedestrian crossings on an urban project, and the discussion turned to exclusive or concurrent phasing. In this case, it did not occur to me that exclusive pedestrian crossings were worth considering in an urban environment since the vehicular levels of service were already strained. My initial reaction was to reject the reviewer’s suggestion of an exclusive crossing, and I highlighted that the vehicular traffic in the intersection would be impacted with no improvement to the pedestrian conditions. My decision to object openly and publicly in front of the planning commission was poor. In my mind, I was thorough in my explanation why this was not a reasonable idea to pursue; however, the commission and public started to question the validity of the peer reviewer’s level of expertise and openly questioned if their review was flawed from the beginning. The public requested – and received – a second peer reviewer, which extended the process another four public hearings. In hindsight, my reaction and subsequent rebuttal to the mere suggestion of

continued on page 5
The State of the Practice: Peer Review
(continued from page 4)

doing additional analysis made our overall profession look less than professional – an unfortunate lesson to learn the hard way.

What Might We Consider as an Industry to Better Conduct Peer Reviews?
Some ideas for making the peer review process better include:

Communicate well before public commentary is released. Many comments made on traffic studies and roadway designs can be addressed through a simple conversation. Typographical errors, misunderstood comments, and simple errors can lead to significant issues when placed upon a public stage. Many municipal planners I interviewed agreed that they would encourage a dialogue between the applicant and a peer reviewer if it could provide closure on issues, as long as the planner was present to hear the issues raised.

Get out from behind your desk when conducting a review. In today’s age of technology, many mapping and aerial photography websites can bring a viewer to just about anywhere on the Earth. There seems to be a general reluctance throughout the industry – especially with younger staff more used to using technology – to “get up and go for a drive.” Visits to a site can reveal unknown traffic congestion, pedestrian usage, and a number of different issues that a computer screen cannot. More and more municipalities are discovering that their peer review consultants are not visiting the subject sites. In the instances when they are visited, they are occurring during inappropriate times (e.g., peak hours for speed observations; off-peak hours for intersection operations).

Respect your colleagues when presenting or responding to discussion points. Municipal and regulatory agencies are staffed by people with a wide range of backgrounds. They often do not fully understand the complex models and traffic theories used by transportation professionals. Often it does little good to argue technical points, such as peak hour factors and lost time, in front of a general public who does not understand the intricacies of transportation engineering. One town planner suggested to me, “Discrediting your peer reviewer does not make you correct. It just makes them incorrect.”

Recognize that opinions vary by their frame of reference. As an example, I was at a zoning board of appeals hearing three years ago and the issue was posed to me: “You say that this project will not have a significant impact on traffic operations. How do you define what is a significant impact? Are 10 peak hour trips significant? What about 50? 500? 1000?” From my perspective, the answer was clear: the 50 new cars that would be rerouted through an intersection were insignificant to me. However, the ten residents who lived along the rerouted vehicle path disagreed, stating that it would be a significant increase in the daily traffic volume along their roadway.

Sound Off!
Please locate the Sound Off! feature in this issue of The Chronicle as an opportunity to let me know your experiences and, more importantly, your thoughts on how to better advance the transportation engineering profession as a whole in the New England community. In a future edition of The Chronicle, we will share some of your thoughts with the rest of the New England ITE community and start a dialogue with our friends and peers in the industry. Alternatively, you can reach me at my e-mail address: rna@vhb.com.

TPCB is Seeking Cities to Host Professional Exams

Are You Interested in Taking Any of the Following ITE Exams on October 20, 2007 in the Rhode Island area?

• Professional Traffic Operations Engineer™ (PTOE)
• Professional Transportation Planner™ (PTP)
• Traffic Operations Practitioner Specialist (TOPS)
• Traffic Signal Operations Specialist™ (TSOS)

The TPCB is seeking cities to hold the PTOE, PTP, TOPS and TSOS exams on Saturday, October 20, 2007. For a location to be considered, an expression of interest for 20 or more persons who would like to sit for any one of the above listed certification exams is required. If a city is chosen, all arrangements for the test site and the proctors are made by the TPCB’s testing consultant.

Please contact Lisa Sherman at shermanld@cdm.com if you are interested.
NEITE Continuing Education News
Joe Balskus, Tighe & Bond

As a result of the curriculum development and negotiations with the National Center for Safe Routes to School for our highly successful Safe Routes to School Seminar held at the December 2006 NEITE Annual Meeting, the National Center has decided to use what was the prototype seminar on the national ITE level!

Safe Routes National Center for Safe Routes to School

In an e-mail to districts and sections, ITE has announced that it is working with the center to support its outreach and education efforts using this course. The course held at NEITE was developed to provide an intensive training and evaluation session on the various issues involved with developing programs, design parameters, soliciting funding through FHWA and implementation with municipalities.

The seminar is also tailored to include current information about specific state and regional programs. The center is now very interested in working with other ITE districts/sections to host similar seminars.

In addition to last year’s successful seminar, the Continuing Education Committee is now planning training sessions for the June, September and December, 2007 NEITE annual meeting.

The June meeting is being organized by the NH and ME chapters while the section committee chair is now organizing the September and December meetings. For September, we are pursuing an at-grade railroad design theme for training session.

If you have any ideas for training needs in the coming year, please contact me directly at jcbalskus@tighebond.com or (203) 712-1100.

I look forward to hearing from you, the membership, with training ideas to ensure we are providing the training where it is needed the most.

A Letter to the Editor

Leadership is a word that we use frequently, and we all like to think we have that quality. The word, however, has different meanings to many of us. To some, the term is automatically applied to anyone in a position of authority or elected office. To others, leadership is independent of position; rather, it relates more to character, the ability to lead, and the willingness to lead. This year, current NEITE President John Mirabito has satisfied all possible definitions of leadership. Yes, he is in an elected position of leadership and he has shown an ability to lead during meetings and the normal conduct of our organization. John has also chosen to boldly go where no man (or woman) has gone before.

This year John organized NEITE’s first (to my knowledge) Strategic Planning Session. When he initially mentioned the idea to me, I thought it had some promise but I wondered if we would ultimately follow-through. John ensured that we did. I am one of those privileged to have taken part in the process and I can report that the session was a success. The professional facilitator and John guided us through a process that was structured, while still flexible enough to allow a free flow of ideas. We defined our organization, and identified strengths and weaknesses. Through a combination of open dialogue and smaller group sessions, we developed strategies to address our weaknesses. I am confident that our follow-through with these ideas will help us ensure future success for the New England Section.

All of our past presidents have left their mark on the section, each providing guidance and making improvements where possible. John, however, has taken the extra step with his vision for the section.

Ken Petraglia, Beta, Inc.

Cheshire Medical Center
Nick Sanders, VHB

Back in 2001, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., (VHB) was retained by the Cheshire Medical Center in Keene, New Hampshire to evaluate traffic operating conditions associated with the planned expansion of its medical facility on Court Street in Keene. Allen Court, a residential street, intersected Court Street (a two-lane roadway) opposite the Medical Center’s main driveway. With a relatively heavy traffic volume on Court Street (ADT of approximately 14,000), motorists from the neighborhood found it difficult to enter onto Court Street from Allen Court. Residents also expressed concern with the high travel speeds that made it difficult for pedestrians to cross Court Street.

To address these concerns, the City of Keene initially had considered the installation of a traffic signal. However, through a series of workshops and neighborhood meetings involving VHB, the Medical Center, residents of the neighborhood, city staff, and community leaders, it was clear that a solution that would enhance pedestrian safety, slow vehicular traffic, and introduce a sense of community character was needed. VHB introduced, evaluated, and recommended the construction of a modern roundabout.

The roundabout, completed in 2003, is relatively small with an outside diameter of approximately 110 feet. A 12-foot wide truck apron encircles the 50-foot diameter landscaped inner center island. The truck apron is composed of textured concrete with sloped granite curbing. The raised splitter islands on each approach provide the necessary deflection to reduce travel speeds as well as to shorten the length of the crosswalks, allowing pedestrians to cross one lane of traffic at a time. Since the completion of the roundabout, the Medical Center has received high praise from the neighborhood. Mr. Frank Werbinski, a senior vice president at that Medical Center notes that, “the roundabout is a huge success... the functionality and the positive comments have exceeded our expectations... traffic now slows on Court Street and access in and out of the neighborhood streets has become easy.”
ITE Meeting Notice
The New England Section, NH Chapter and ME Chapter

Topic  Transportation Impacts at Mixed-Use Developments

Date  Thursday, June 21, 2007
York Harbor Inn
Coastal Rte. 1A
York, Maine 03911
Telephone: (207) -363-5119

Directions  See website: www.yorkharborinn.com

Day Programs
8:00 AM – 2:00 PM  Transportation Impacts and Mixed Use Developments - 5 PDHs
Kevin Hooper, P.E.,
Kevin Hooper Associates
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM  Traditional Neighborhood Design - 2 PDHs
Rick Chellman – TND Engineering

Evening Program  MaineDOT Commissioner David Cole

Schedule
7:30 AM  Registration / Sign In
8:00 AM – 11:30 AM  Kevin Hooper, P.E.
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM  Lunch Buffet
12:30 PM – 2:00 PM  Kevin Hooper, P.E. (cont.)
11:00 AM – 2:00 PM  ITE New England Section Board Meeting
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM  Rick Chellman
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM  Social Hour
5:30 PM – 6:15 PM  Dinner
6:15 PM – 7:15 PM  Presentations followed by Q&A

Costs
Please enter the number of people attending in each box. Lunch and dinner will be served buffet-style.

Full Program with Lunch and Dinner  $140 x ________ = ________
Day Course Only w/ Lunch  $100 x ________ = ________
Evening and/or afternoon w/Dinner  $40 x ________ = ________
Total Cost = ________

Reservations
Please mail, e-mail, or fax
reservations by
June 14, 2007 to:
Rob Kenerson
BACTS
40 Harlow St.
Bangor, ME 04401
Telephone: 207.942.6389
Fax: 207.942.3548
E-mail: rkenerson@emdc.org

Number Attending  ________
Name  ____________________________
Organization  ____________________________
Address  ____________________________
Telephone  ____________________________
E-mail  ____________________________

Reservations canceled after June 16 will be invoiced.
Vote for District One International Director

Members of District One have the opportunity to vote for a new international director from our District. A nominating committee headed by Paul Eng-Wong and also consisting of Tom Soyk and Mike Salatti identified several candidates. Two of the candidates (names and photos, but not bios, appear below) have accepted the nomination and expressed their written commitment to run and serve the District. Besides these candidates, the District’s by-laws allows for additional nominations by interested petitioners.

Besides these candidates, the District’s by-laws allows for additional nominations by interested petitioners. Additional nominations may be made by petition, signed by not less than 15 voting members of the District, with at least three petitioners from each Section in the District. Each such petition shall be accompanied by the written consent of the nominee to hold office if elected and each such petition shall be received by the president not later than 75 days (May 22) prior to the Annual Meeting of the Institute. Interested candidates should address all petitioning documentation to the district chair:

Michael D. Schauer
Federal Highway Administration, Room 719
Leo O’Brien Federal Building
One Clinton Square,
Albany, NY 12207
E-mail address: Michael.Schauer@fhwa.dot.gov

The election ballots should be mailed out and received by the members by June 20 and the election closes July 20.

Good luck to all candidates and thanks to TransTalk, a publication of the Institute of Transportation Engineers ITE Metropolitan Section of New York & New Jersey for allowing the reprint with permission.

Transportation Engineers Recognize MBTA’s Fuentes and Hooper at Meeting

Kathryn Buxton, Maine Better Transportation Association

MBTA Executive Director Maria Fuentes and Kevin Hooper, P.E., of Kevin Hooper Associates, were among five individuals recognized for their leadership and service in the transportation industry by the New England Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (NEITE) at the organization’s annual meeting December 4, 2006, in Warwick, Rhode Island.

Fuentes received the 2006 Transportation Leadership Award for her “vision, leadership and tireless effort advocating for Maine’s transportation systems.” Fuentes has been the executive director of the Maine Better Transportation Association since 1992. Since that time, she has been an active advocate for the funding of various transportation projects throughout Maine including roadways, bridges, ports, rail, and pedestrian and bicycle trails. She has led several efforts to pass transportation bonds and was instrumental in gaining approval for the widening of the Maine Turnpike. She has been a key organizer of the annual Maine Transportation Conference. Fuentes earned a bachelor of science degree, majoring in public relations and marketing from Boston University in 1982 and a master of business administration degree from the University of Maine in 1985.

Hooper received NEITE’s 2006 Distinguished Service Award for his “many years of outstanding service to the transportation and traffic engineering profession resulting in a lasting contribution to the section and the profession.” Kevin Hooper is president of Kevin Hooper Associates, the transportation planning firm he started in 1997 after holding positions with public sector agencies (in Georgia, Connecticut, and Ohio) and private consulting firms (in Virginia and Maine) over the previous 20 years. Hooper served as editor for the ITE Trip Generation Handbook and as technical editor for ITE’s Parking Generation, 3rd Edition. He was the principal investigator for the NCHRP project that produced NCHRP Report 323 ‘Travel Characteristics at Large-Scale Suburban Activity Centers.’

He is currently participating on an NCHRP project to develop improved estimation methods for internal capture at mixed-use developments.

He has also conducted numerous training courses and seminars, including the NTI training course that demonstrated NCHRP 255 techniques for refining and interpreting travel demand model output. Hooper is the immediate past president of the New England Section of ITE and of the ITE Maine Chapter. He previously served as president of the Washington, D.C. Section of ITE.

Hooper received his bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from the University of Cincinnati.

NEITE Chronicle Word Search

G A T S N U N G T R G E Y N
N W C R O I S A A S H T O O
I E U C A I M N E P I Y T I
N I R H I N W M E R B A N T
N V B P G D S T O M M W C A
U E A L E E E E I I T A H E R
R R R A S P R N T Y S G V E
T R A N S P O R T A T I O N
H E I N G D E I M E A H L E
G E R I E I C E O A R S U G
I P N N R A S T D E M S M P
L A I G P I P E U H O A E I
D P T R A F F I C D M U M S R
E N C A C R A M O U P M A T
R E E N I G N E I T E A P E
W o r d B a n k

AASHTO  PE  peer review
accident  planning
capacity  priority
design  red light running
engineer  traffic
MassHighway  transit
mast arm  transportation
MUTCD  trip generation
NEITE  volumes
NEMA  US
NIMBY  V

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The Institute of Transportation Engineers New England Chronicle
The Successful Deployment of a Transit Signal Priority System; Springfield, Massachusetts

Thomas Narrigan, Springfield Area Transit Company; Matthew Chase, VHB; Joseph Herr, VHB; Tim Doherty, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

The City of Springfield Massachusetts and the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority have installed a first-in-the-region, in-vehicle Traffic Signal Priority (TSP) system for buses on one of the city’s busiest routes. VHB, the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) teamed up with the City of Springfield to implement this new system that had the potential to help increase on-time performance for the PVTA’s bus fleet, decrease travel times for express bus routes during rush hour, attract and retain riders and reduce congestion related emissions by decreasing idling time by PVTA buses.

The system works through the use of optical-based transmitters (located on the buses), and receivers (located on the traffic signals). The transmitters emit both visible and infrared light. As the bus approaches an intersection (within approximately 400 feet), the receiver detects the optical transmission, and, based on status of the traffic signal sequence, either shortens the cross-street’s green light, or extends the green light along the bus route. In the past, bus-prioritization systems have proved less-than-ideal operation, because they disrupted the precisely coordinated timing of the traffic signal network along the prioritized route. The system installed in the City of Springfield avoids this problem, thanks to the new algorithm that governs the signal timing. A wireless GPS system installed at each cabinet maintains an accurate time reference between intersections. The system also supports an emergency-vehicle pre-emption capability, which can detect approaching emergency vehicles, and give them a green light through the intersections. These two systems co-exist at each project location.

The PVTA operates a bus fleet of nearly 10 million passengers per year. PVTA runs 175 buses on 44 different routes and operates its four different fixed route operators, PVTA and PVPC, and sought to develop an express route with a TSP system that would facilitate direct service from the outskirts of Springfield into downtown.

From the beginning, the project was structured around some innovative features which were expected to be replicated in other parts of the PVTA system. The final project focused on ITS applications that were simple and low cost.

Project Implementation
System Design
In order to minimize construction costs, the system was designed to reuse as much of the existing traffic signal control infrastructure as possible. This included retaining traffic signal heads, supports, cabling as well as vehicle and pedestrian detection wherever possible. New traffic signal control cabinets, emergency vehicle preemption and bus priority systems were integrated into the existing system. To further reduce construction costs, the City of Springfield utilized its own staff to perform the installation of the system, along with technical support from VHB. In addition, the project specifications required that the system supplier provide on-site technical support during construction. While the existing corridor contained a coordinated traffic signal system, there was no communication between intersections. Coordination was achieved through time-based coordination where the accurate time clock resident in each traffic controller provided the necessary time reference to maintain coordination. The new system installed as part of this project provides a GPS input directly into the traffic controller to maintain clock accuracy.

Signal Priority Control Equipment
While all of the traffic signal traffic controllers available on the market today have internal preemption capability, not all of them have the specific capability to support a bus priority system. Preemption for an emergency vehicle (high priority) involves an immediate termination of a conflicting movement or phase to

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This competitive grant using Congestion and Air Quality Mitigation (CMAQ) funds sought to reduce auto trips and improve air quality. The Springfield Grant which was developed by the city’s Planning and Public Works Departments, as well as PVTA and PVPC, and sought to develop an express route with a TSP system that would facilitate direct service from the outskirts of Springfield into downtown.
ITE New England Chapter Updates

University of Massachusetts
Amherst Chapter Update
The UMass Amherst ITE Student Chapter has participated in several technical, professional development, and service activities recently. On March 7, the chapter hosted the 8th Annual UMass/NEITE Technical Day on campus.

Over the last few months, the chapter has engaged in several community service activities. It sponsored a clothing drive for the Amherst Survival Center; hosted a table at BSCES ThinkFest, which was aimed at introducing middle school and high school students to jobs in the sciences; and worked with Monument Valley Middle School’s Future City team serving as their engineer mentor. The Student Chapter also conducted an inventory of the posted speed limit signs on campus for UM Mass Physical Plant. This information will help drive the campus debate about modifying posted speed limits.

In January, while in the Washington D.C. area for the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting, students traveled to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety Vehicle Research Center in Ruckersville, VA where they toured the facilities and watched a crash test on a Ford Edge. The Chapter continues to participate in other professional development activities including a traffic count conducted in Chicopee and transit user data collection in Boston.

All work and no play makes for a boring student chapter, so in April, the chapter held a roller-skating party. The party was a great success and an excellent opportunity for students to have some fun before heading into the busy end-of-semester crunch.

The chapter is sad to announce that in March, UMass ITE Student Chapter member, Anson Tripp passed away. Anson was an active member of the chapter, most recently having traveled to the TRB Annual Meeting and the MAITE Student Research Symposium with the group. He was also a devoted attendee of the Transportation Seminar Speaker Series. His graduate work was focused on public transit infrastructure. Professor John Collura noted that he was “one of the brightest students we’ve had in the program over the last 30 years.” Anson will be missed by many.

More information on the UMass Amherst Student Chapter, including the chapter’s newsletter, can be found online at www.ecs.umass.edu/ite.

Maine Chapter ITE
The Maine Chapter of ITE held its Spring Meeting at DiMillo’s Floating Restaurant in Portland, Maine on March 29, 2007. Those present enjoyed a great technical program and a delicious meal overlooking the beautiful Casco Bay. Sharat Kalluri, P.E., sr. transportation engineer of Wilbur Smith Associates conducted a “Presentation of Simulation Results of VISSIM.” He highlighted the VISSIM software and compared this software with other traffic simulation software. There were approximately 25 people at this event.

There will be a New England Section/ NH Chapter/ ME Chapter meeting held Thursday, June 21, 2007 at the York Harbor Inn on Coastal Route 1A in York, ME. The Technical program will feature two speakers: Kevin Hooper, P.E., of Kevin Hooper Associates on “Transportation Impacts at Mixed-Use Developments;” and Rick Cheliman of TND Engineering on “Traditional Neighborhood Design.” The evening speaker will be MaineDOT Commissioner David Cole. If you would like further information, please e-mail Rob Kenerson at rkenerson@emdc.org.

Reservations are required by June 14, 2007.

The Maine Chapter of ITE will hold its annual Portland Sea Dogs picnic and game on June 26, 2007. Bring the family to enjoy a wonderful evening at the ballpark with an all-you-can-eat picnic and ballgame with the Connecticut Defenders for $22 a ticket. Contact Rob Kenerson at rkenerson@emdc.org for tickets.

The Maine Chapter of ITE is looking for additional candidates for the Chapter’s secretary/treasurer position. Elections will be held the first two weeks of June and the results announced at the June 21st Section meeting in York, ME. Please forward nominations immediately to rkenerson@emdc.org; Stephen.Landry@maine.gov or TErrico@WilburSmith.com.

ITE New England Directory

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ITE New England Chapter Updates

Rhode Island ITE Chapter Update
On March 28th, RIITE held a luncheon on the “Emergence of Roundabouts in Rhode Island.” The event was filled to capacity as officials from the FHWA-Rhode Island office and Rhode Island Department of Transportation discussed the benefits of roundabouts and where they could work. Both agencies pledged their support of these traffic control devices and recommended that all future plans for intersection improvements in Rhode Island include a roundabout alternative for review. This luncheon was a basic introductory to roundabouts and was focused on helping municipalities understand them. Based on the overwhelming success of this luncheon, RIITE is planning a future meeting on the planning and design aspects of roundabouts for transportation professionals in Rhode Island.

Vermont ITE Chapter Update
Since our chapter’s elections took place in mid-January the new board has been working hard to continue the solid forward momentum the chapter has maintained for the last few years. The board is engaged with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Traffic Research Division in its efforts to overhaul the Traffic Impact Study Guidelines and Level of Service Policy. Vermont ITE members and other interested parties have sent comments, suggestions, and questions to VTrans. We plan to convene an interactive session with the state once the guidelines are ready for another round of review and input.

In our attempt to build a more transparent and inviting organization, the board has authorized the creation of a new chapter website. The website will allow the consolidation of message boards and e-mail contacts, and provide a place for VT ITE members to interact. We plan to convene an interactive session with the state once the guidelines are ready for another round of review and input.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Mr. Knowlton was presented with an honorary “Granite Chip” as a token of the NH Chapter’s appreciation.

On March 30, 2007, NH Chapter President Bob Bollinger joined other NH Engineering Society presidents at a meeting with NH Governor John Lynch at the State House in Concord. Governor Lynch fielded a wide variety of questions ranging from the widening of I-93 to engineering education, and personally extended his congratulations to Sean James, the NH Society of Professional Engineers Young Engineer of the Year.

New Hampshire Chapter Update
The New Hampshire Chapter held its spring meeting on March 27, 2007 at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, New Hampshire. The technical session featured a presentation entitled, “Safety Applications of Intelligent Transportation Systems.” The session was presented by Butch Knowlton, P.E., Director of Operations at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation. The event drew approximately 25 attendees.

Upcoming Highway Capacity Workshop
A five-day Highway Capacity course, offered by Northwestern University’s Center for Public Safety, will be taught at MassHighway (Boston, Massachusetts – Transportation Building) from July 9 to July 13.

- The cost is $1,000 per registrant.
- Attendees will earn 3.4 CEUs (34 PDHs).
- Participants will also receive a reference manual that includes a coordinated series of work problems.

To register, please contact Northwestern University directly. Follow the link for more information. nucps.northwestern.edu/course
Candidates for International Vice President

Rodney W. Kelly, PE
Vice President, Parsons
Dallas, Texas, USA

ITE has been my passion for 45 years. I have supported and still do fully support ITE. I am committed to the educational and scientific principles that it stands for and its continuing mission to enrich and enhance the movement of people and goods worldwide.

ITE exists for the benefit of its members, the transportation professionals. ITE’s officers and International Board of Direction are charged with knowing and anticipating the needs and expectations of members and responding accordingly.

If elected International Vice President, I will fulfill the responsibilities of my office through the enactment of five major areas of emphasis that I have developed and which are outlined below. I will further dedicate myself to ensuring that ITE is working for its members. ITE strives to continually excel in its commitment to the transportation profession. My pledge is to provide the leadership and support needed to fulfill that commitment.

Providing Membership Services For You

The theme, membership services for you, is timely and critical to the continued growth of ITE, the enrichment of its members and its responsibility to the transportation profession. To fulfill this vision, I have established membership growth and service goals that include:

- Advancing technical excellence and credibility
- Developing and mentoring the next generation of ITE leaders
- Increasing volunteer participation
- Identifying and grooming new members
- Sustaining current and seeking new revenue sources to keep ITE robust

I have developed five major areas of emphasis to accomplish these goals.

1. Knowing what members want and need
- Seeking continuing, periodic input from the members on all aspects of membership services, especially regarding mega-issues
- Using focused communication mechanisms such as surveys, forums, e-mail and listening sessions at local meetings to identify and understand member needs

2. Responding with Specific Actions
Addressing and prioritizing mega-issues like:
- Safety
  - Developing partnerships with agencies and groups such as TRB, AARP and AASHTO to address mutual issues of concern
  - Focusing on emerging issues such as aging drivers and driver distractions
  - Promoting the issues to elected officials and other decision-makers responsible for the allocation of funds
- Workforce Development
  - Partnering with universities to promote careers in transportation
  - Continuing to provide relevant continuing education
  - Working with employers to promote value-based salary structures
  - Identifying other concerns through input and feedback from you, the members

3. Developing Next-Generation Engineer/ Professional Member Participation
Implementing a progressive Next-Generation Engineers council, standing committee, or forum that offers the following:
- Technical, management and ITE leadership training
- Mentoring programs
- Advice on professional registration and certification
- Forums to express membership needs and desires
- Opportunities to present innovative ideas to the entire membership

4. Enhancing Member Interaction Globally
- Supporting recommendations of Canadian and District 8 white papers
- Developing partnerships with professional societies, agencies and groups
- Expanding the Transit Council efforts in publishing articles on technical topics of
- Worldwide interest to all technical councils

5. Increasing Council Activities Participation
- Creating incentives to attract volunteers
- Implementing white paper recommendations to enhance member recruitment management and recognition
- Focusing on next-generation members to take advantage of their energy, enthusiasm and insights
- Consulting similar organizations for additional ideas

Qualifications and Experience to Fulfill the Vision

- Served at all levels of ITE, including the International Board of Direction, representing two different Districts.
- Provided leadership and involvement in a broad range of ITE activities as a current member of the Coordinating Council and Chair of the Transit Council
- Experienced with all modes of transportation and most technical areas of the profession
- Experienced in the planning, design and operation of transportation systems
- Experienced in the public, private and academic sectors
- Served in numerous professional and private life leadership roles that afford the expertise and skills to serve as International Vice President

Summary
In summary, I have the technical knowledge and management skills to proficiently preside over the broad range of issues and personalities involved in the fulfillment of my vision for ITE.

If elected your International Vice President, my commitment will be to reduce my professional workload significantly and devote a substantial amount of my time to accomplishing the membership growth and service goals that are necessary to the continued growth of ITE. I will work diligently, patiently and persistently to ensure that ITE continues to extend and enhance the services we need and expect.

My proposed five major areas of emphasis are designed to accomplish the goals of seeking member input and providing services. It is my quest to see ITE offer every opportunity for each of its members to participate in ITE-sponsored activities that will be beneficial to both the individual member as well as the transportation profession as a whole.
Candidates for International Vice President

Kenneth H. Voigt, PE
Senior Traffic Engineer, Ayers Associates
Waukesha, Wisconsin, USA

Over the past 40 years, I have been a traffic engineer, a transportation planner, a university adjunct professor and a proud member of ITE. I have just completed three years as an ITE International Director, developing our mega-issue program strategies. All of this has allowed me to appreciate the many facets of our ITE family. We have challenges ahead that we can meet with my toolbox of ideas.

Ken’s Toolbox for ITE’s Future

Four critical areas to our profession’s growth:

1. Core Technical Excellence. We must enhance our technical leadership in transportation.
   - ITE Journal
     - Sponsor articles on timely technical topics.
     - Seek grassroots articles on current practices.
   - Increase university-published articles.
   - Workshops and urban forums - Our Webinars reached 10,000 people last year. Webinars can be augmented with face-to-face workshops.
   - Sponsored publications-Increase technical materials available and expand our financial support of important technical publications.

2. Membership (Project 20,000). We need to grow locally and internationally.
   - Existing members - Enhance core services for our practicing transportation engineers and planners with a focus on increasing our government agency memberships.
   - Student and academic members - Increase our appeal to academic members, by creating:
     - A “University Page” in every issue of ITE Journal
     - A peer review program that qualifies for tenure consideration
     - A national student competition that energizes university chapters and provides national media recognition for ITE
   - Planners and designers - We must reach out to transportation planners and designers. They are an important part of the transportation solution for our communities.

3. International Membership. ITE’s international role is a mega-issue, and all members benefit from understanding transportation issues around the world.
   - Communication
     - Co-sponsor international symposiums.
     - Create an “International Activities Page” in every issue of ITE Journal.
   - Sponsor an ITE international reception during TRB when many members are in the United States.
   - E-membership - An e-membership category for international members could increase international benefits and reduce costs.
   - Regionalism - Create international regions for transportation communication in regions such as Europe, Asia and South America. We need to work with transportation partners in developing countries where transportation safety is a major issue.

4. Enhancing Our Image. Communities and universities are dropping transportation engineering departments and programs. We do not want to see the future as a Bureau of Sewer, Water and Transportation!
   - Awards - National awards recognize our profession as well as its outstanding achievements. We need to publicize these successes at the grassroots level.
   - Elected officials and the media - Establish a local elected officials briefing on transportation issues similar to ITE’s monthly Executive Digest. We must encourage elected officials and media contacts to seek out ITE for current information.
   - ITE gear shop - Create an ITE gear shop, with logo clothing, portfolios and other items to show our pride in ITE and promote our organization.

ITE Experience
2004–2006 International Director; 2006 International Annual Meeting Co-Chair; 2005 Transportation Achievement Award Committee Chair; District 4 Annual Meeting Chair; Wisconsin Member Program for Growth Chair; Traffic Engineering for Small Communities Workshop Founder; Technical Council Department Chair; District 4 Vice Chair; Wisconsin Section President; Multiplex Theater Trip Generation Task Force Chair; Nominations Committee; Smart Growth Task Force; Elected Leadership Task Force; Consultants Council Executive Committee.

Education and Professional Registration
- Master of Science, Transportation Engineering, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
- Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- Registered Professional Engineer in Wisconsin

Awards
- 2003 Voigt Soccer Park, City of Brookfield
- 2002 Olympic Torch Runner
- 2000 Wisconsin State Soccer Hall of Fame Inductee—Administrator
- 2000 HNTB Fellow Technical Expert
- 1998 Wisconsin Distinguished Service Award
- 1998 University of Wisconsin–Madison Student Chapter Outstanding Instructor Award
- 1998 AASHTO Exemplary Partner Award
- 1996 Wisconsin Association of Consulting Engineers Engineering Excellence Award

Why Ken?
It has been an honor to serve ITE as an International Director for the past three years. During this time, I have been actively involved in developing our mega-issues and determining how ITE can move these issues forward. I co-authored a white paper for our next mega-issue, “Raising the Image of Our Profession.” I was co-chair for the ITE 2006 Annual Meeting and Exhibit in Milwaukee, WI, USA. I am also on the committees that developed our Elected Membership Webinars and our current Membership Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation Task Force.

When I first joined ITE, I was mentored by Harvey SheBESTA. I never thought I would have the opportunity to follow in his footsteps and run for ITE International Vice President. I have learned so much about the ITE family. This knowledge strengthened my commitment to ITE and what it stands for. My Olympic flame still burns with a passion to use my toolbox of ideas for ITE’s future. I ask for your support in making a difference for our profession.
The Successful Deployment of a Transit Signal Priority System; Springfield, Massachusetts

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provide a green indication for an approaching vehicle. This type of override of normal signal operation will cause the intersection to drop coordination and require that it re-synch over as many as five cycles before coordination is back in place. With bus preemption (low priority), the intent is to provide a preferential treatment for an approaching bus such that its headway is reduced without dropping the intersection out of coordination thus minimizing impacts to normal signal operations. The project specifications contained functional requirements that the system needed to achieve so that the bus priority system would operate as required, maintain traffic signal coordination along the arterial and provide for as needed override of the system when an emergency vehicle preemption event occurred. The successful system bidder was required to demonstrate system capability prior to being approved for use on the project. The traffic signal controller platform used was a NEMA TS-2, type 2 architecture, Naztec model 980 with transit priority firmware loaded into the unit. The transit detection system, as well as the emergency vehicle preemption system is a 3M Opticom system model 700 series.

Transit Signal Priority Integration

Unique to this project was the process in which the system was ultimately completed and fine tuned. Instead of the traditional method of providing plans and specifications to a contractor to construct the system and then performing an inspection, this project required that a team approach to final system integration be performed. In the course of the final stages of construction, representatives from the city, equipment suppliers, transit agency and the system designer worked together in the field to properly program the various control elements and fine tune as necessary.

Project Operations

Transit Operations

Prior to the implementation of the Sumner Avenue Green Light Special bus route, PVTA operated only a fixed route along Sumner Avenue and Main Street in Springfield with extended service into the adjacent City of Chicopee. This route, the Green 1, as typical with urban transit routes, serviced many stops along the route located at nearly every other street corner. Service is provided approximately every 15 minutes in the peak hours (5:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM); 20 minute headways are provided the rest of the operational day. Travel time for this route from the outskirts of Springfield, at the Five Town Plaza, which is near the intersection of Allen Street/Cooley Street, to downtown could take over 45 minutes. The new express route, the Green Light Special, provides service along the Sumner Avenue corridor traveling from the Five Town Plaza to Baystate Medical Center during the weekday mornings between 7:00 AM and 9:30 AM and 3:30 PM and 6:00 PM. During the weekday afternoon, service starts at Mercy Hospital.

< Figure 1: Green Light Special Bus Route

The bus stop locations for inbound and outbound routes do not include every stop that is included in the fixed route along Sumner Avenue or Main Street. The more frequently used stops were evaluated and included as the primary stops for the express bus route. It was determined that stops on the far side of a traffic signal work better with this application. The following stops were included:
• Five Town Plaza (Allen/Cooley)
• Sumner & White
• The “X”
• Sumner & Fort Pleasant
• Main & Harrison
• Baystate Hospital
• 3300 Main Street

Emitters

Currently the PVTA has 175 buses in its fleet, of which, only nine currently have priority signal emitters. In the initial project concept, the emitters would be turned on/off with the bus sign; however, the current buses did not have the capability to operate this way. Therefore, all of the buses were wired with manual on/off switches for the drivers to manually use the emitters. PVTA instructed drivers to make sure the manual switches are turned off when the bus is not in service as an Express Bus on the Sumner Avenue corridor. This was an important component to ensuring that the system operated efficiently. The emitters needed to be off when buses were “dead heading” to the park & ride lot at Five Town Plaza. Also as part of this process, the City requested that PVTA inform them of the routes that the out of service buses use. This was also important because the city has approximately 40 intersections with high priority (preemption) capabilities and did not want to disable any low priority capabilities at any of the locations, other than Sumner Avenue, that may have low priority enabled.

Transit Improvement

In order to measure the effectiveness of this system, PVTA and PVPC collected data at 3 specific time periods relative to the project implementation. The data collection included:
• Before traffic signal coordination,
• After traffic signal coordination,
• After implementation of transit/bus priority

This data collection was required to satisfy the requirements of the grant funding focusing on the comparison of before and after data. This collection of data provides a measure for the overall effectiveness of the implementation of both traffic signal coordination and transit/bus priority. Once the data collection was completed for the “before traffic signal coordination,” the system was turned on at all locations prior to the official start of the Express Bus Service.

Travel Time Improvements

The Green Light Special service has reduced travel time across the entire route by 15 minutes; from 45 to 30 minutes. This time savings is a combination of the route’s limited stop and I-91 express operations, more efficient routing and the Transit Signal Priority System. Rider ship on the route has ranged between 7 and 15 passengers per hour, with an average of 11 passengers during the route’s first 4 months. The performance is in line with PVTA’s other express routes which have 15 passengers per hour, but below PVTA’s target of 20 passengers per hour. However, the ridership of the existing Green 1 route is up 8% for October 2006 when compared to October 2005, indicating that the express service is creating new riders and trips for the PVTA System.

Air Quality Improvements

All of Western Massachusetts is designated as a non-attainment area for ozone, and the city metropolitan area is designated a non-attainment area for carbon monoxide. The project will provide both PVTA and the city with an opportunity to reduce vehicle miles traveled and poor air quality while offering a viable alternative to single occupant commuter vehicles. The project includes upgrades to existing signals and new timing plans, along with coordination to facilitate intermodal traffic flow and enhance motorist safety, while improving the efficiency of the Sumner Avenue corridor.

Future Bus Priority

The Project’s Future

PVTA expects to make changes to the schedule

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in April which should make it more convenient for passengers to use the service. During the longer term PVTA expects to analyze the Express service along with regular G1 service to determine the correct overall level of service in the corridor. PVTA is seeking to implement additional Transit Signal Priority systems in other appropriate corridors in Western Massachusetts. Routes include the State Street corridor in Springfield as well as the Route 9 corridor between Northampton and Amherst.

Lessons Learned
This project began with the city and PVTA’s desire to increase transit ridership in the corridor, and why not provide something new and innovated for transit riders? This innovated system also provided the City of Springfield with the ability to try something new, which would be covered by a grant. The initial conversation with the Department of Public Works made it clear that the signals in the corridor would need to be updated to allow for transit priority, but this too could be funded as part of the grant application.

For ITS projects to be successful, relationships between different entities need to be fostered. From the beginning PVTA and the City of Springfield had a positive relationship over a project with mutual benefit. PVTA brought to the table resources to make traffic signal improvement possible and, in exchange received the ability to use the Transit Signal Priority System. PVTA and the city’s agreement formed the basis for the first interagency agreement under the Regional ITS Architecture for the Pioneer Valley. As PVTA moves forward to implement additional TSP systems in other area corridors, evidence of a successfully working relationship will be very useful in moving these innovated techniques forward.

Funding
Federal funds in Transit and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Programs (CMAQ) are eligible to be used for projects that benefit transit. In this case, CMAQ funds were transferred from the Federal Highway Administration to the Federal Transit Administration and then granted to PVTA. PVTA was the recipient of the funds and reimbursed the city for a portion of the expenses for the signal improvements.

Conclusion
This project developed from “a what if” conversation between PVTA and the City of Springfield. PVTA had received a number of TDM grants from the Executive Office of Transportation before this project, and sought out partnership opportunities from member communities to promote new transit services that also include using innovated ITS applications.

Presentation prepared for APTA’s 2007 Bus and Paratransit Conference and International Bus Rodeo. The APTA, its officers and employees are in no way responsible for the contents of this presentation and any and all liability arising out of publication of its contents rest with the author.

UMass Student Chapter Technical Day
David Hurwitz, UMass

The 8th Annual NEITE/UMass Technical Day took place on Wednesday, March 7, 2007 from 12:00 noon until 7:00 pm. For the first time in the conference’s history Tech Day was held in the Massachusetts Room, overlooking the basketball arena in the Mullins Center. The event began with a working lunch on developing the future of our workforce. The discussion was facilitated by Dr. Michael Knodler (assistant professor UMass Amherst), and Phillip Caruso (director ITE International).

The afternoon technical session was titled, “The Future of our Cities: Sustainable Transportation,” and included the following presentations:

- “Setting the Transportation Agenda” by Jeff McCollough-Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
- “New Opportunities and Challenges in Regional Planning” by Bill Lyons-Traffic Solutions

The day culminated with a buffet dinner, which incorporated an address by Phillip Caruso on the state of ITE, an awards ceremony, and a keynote address by John Mullin (dean of UMass Amherst Graduate School). Several awards were presented including the following:

- Jane F. Garvey/UMass ITE Transportation Leadership Award: Lucy Garlaukas (FHWA)
- UMass ITE Distinguished Alumni Award: Kim Hazavartian (TEPP)
- UMass Student Service Award: Heather Rothenberg
- TEAM Travel Scholarship Award: David Hurwitz

NEITE Legislative Liaison Committee
Sudhir Murthy, TrafInfo

Members
The committee consists of a chair and a representative from each of the six New England states:

- Sudhir Murthy – committee chair
- Jay Koolis – Connecticut
- Christine Palmer – Rhode Island
- Gary Hebert – Massachusetts
- Kim Hazavartian – New Hampshire
- Kevin Hooper – Maine
- Joe Segale – Vermont

Purpose
The purpose of the committee, covering each of the six New England states, is:

- To monitor legislative and policy actions by state legislatures, state department of transportations, and others that may affect the transportation system and/or the transportation engineering and planning profession.
- To keep NEITE members abreast of changes in laws and policies that have the potential to affect their work through:
  - Quarterly reports to the NEITE Executive Board
  - Articles in the Chronicle
- To establish contact and attempt to meet at least once during the year with the chair(s) or their staff of the Transportation Committee within each state legislature to:
  - To help maintain on-going contact between the legislature and NEITE
  - To be informed of the Transportation Committee’s focus areas
- To work with the NEITE Executive Board to develop a “Position Paper” on a topic/issue of interest to the members to be selected by the Board. The paper will help advocate NEITE’s position on the topic/issue with the state legislatures.

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Upcoming Events

June 21
NEITE/ME/NH Chapter Meeting
York Harbor Inn
Robert Kenerson
rkenerson@emdc.org

August 5—8
ITE 2007 Annual Meeting and Exhibit
David L. Lawrence Convention Center:
Pittsburgh, PA
www.ite.org/annualmeeting

September 18
NEITE/MA Chapter Meeting (tentative)
Waltham, MA
Robert Campbell
rcampbell@townofbraintreegov.org

To see a list of all activities and news relating to the ITE visit www.ite.org/site/event.asp or www.neite.org for NEITE specific information.