Inside:

- National Effort to Improve Rural Agency Input in the Statewide Planning Process
- Get Ready for RABA
- More on GASB 34: What's the Value of Your Infrastructure?
- Road Scholar Plans Move Ahead
- Keep What You've Got! (Good Employees)
- KDOT/Audubon Partnership
- Nine Cities to Receive Funding for Bike/Ped Paths
- Quick Guide to Local Funding
- Calendar
- Video Reviews
- Lending Library and more!

Getting in the Loop

New FHWA course targets local agencies for involvement in statewide transportation planning process

... by Pat Weaver .................

Kansas recently hosted a pilot for a new workshop developed by the Federal Highway Administration to help local transportation officials and staff learn how and why to participate more in the statewide transportation planning process. The workshop, held on February 12, 2002, in Topeka, was the second test-run held nationally to fine-tune the materials before wider dissemination in Kansas and throughout the country.

Representatives participating in this workshop were from throughout Kansas—city and county governments, rural transit agencies, rural planning agencies, local chambers of commerce, and rural development. Also participating were representatives from the Kansas Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, the Kansas LTAP and Kansas Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP). Representatives from a few LTAP and RTAP programs outside Kansas also participated to learn how they might take this workshop back to their own states.

The reason we called you all together...

The workshop focused on the importance of coordinating and integrating the decision-making processes of transportation planning and local planning, including challenges faced by many rural communities. About 40 individuals participated to learn and to critique the workshop. Presenters discussed effective practices, strategies and tools successfully employed by others around the country. The workshop was developed by the Statewide Transportation Planning Team at FHWA Headquarters with assistance from FHWA's Midwestern Resource Center.

Participants indicated they were interested in learning more about the reauthorization of TEA-21 and other grant programs, the use of demonstration funding in a rural setting and innovative or creative use of multiple-agency federal funding.

continued on page 2 ➤
Rural transportation planning, continued from page 1

Workshop participants had a lively lunchtime discussion about local issues they believe need to be addressed in Kansas’s statewide planning process.

What are the issues?

Planning-specific
—limited planning tools to address rural community issues.
—dependence of traditional planning on growth in a stable or declining environment.
—improving transportation infrastructure to support economic development.

Roads
—increased capacity needs of a major rural arterial road.
—construction of major arterial roads to connect two airports.
—city/county road maintenance and upgrade issues.
—low volume roads.
—subdivision roads.

Bridges
—replacement of geometrically-substandard bridges on rural arterial and rural collector roads of major waterways.

Rail
—trains blocking at grade street crossings.
—survival of rail service to rural communities, especially in the heavy-grain producing areas of the state.
—passenger train service.
—impacts of demise of rural service.

Transit
—commuter transit.
—needs assessments.
—long-term planning for coordination.
—planning for capital projects (Section 5309).
—crossing state lines.
—coordination with area transit providers.

Bicycles
—coordination of city and county bike trails.

Air Travel
—air service.

planning agencies more involved in statewide planning, instead of each level of government (or mode of transportation) making planning decisions on their own.

Suggested improvements
Obviously, the task of bringing diverse agencies together to discuss involvement in a statewide rural intermodal transportation planning process is formidable. The list of issues is as long as the list of participants. However, there were some interesting observations made during the course of the day.

First, the message of local involvement in statewide planning must get to local officials in a format that is useful to them. It’s important

Level of involvement in statewide planning process
Local rural agencies indicated that currently they have little or no involvement in the statewide planning process. One public works official indicated that it “would be helpful to be involved in State planning at a staff level (not local governing officials) in the event State projects conflict with local plans.”

Local issues in rural areas
Local agency participants identified a number of planning-related concerns, ranging from road maintenance and upgrade issues to rural ITS—and a great deal in between. The box at right provides a general list of some of those topics.

In addition, local participants indicated they were interested in learning more about the reauthorization of TEA-21 and other grant programs, the use of demonstration funding in a rural setting and innovative or creative use of multiple-agency federal funding. Others mentioned rural ITS (intelligent transportation systems), safety issues, and including transit in the rural intermodal transportation planning process.

The group discussed the importance of identifying appropriate levels of analysis in a rural transportation planning setting and getting rural
the local officials understand the relationship of transportation planning to the land use decisions they make. Several examples were given of land use decisions made at the local level that were in direct conflict with long-range transportation decisions being made by the State.

Participants from state and local agencies noted the need for early communication and joint planning to minimize complications later.

Several examples were given of land use decisions made at the local level that were in direct conflict with long-range transportation decisions being made by the State.

Participants recommended that the message be taken to local elected officials at their own forums such as meetings of their state associations.

Participants noted that technical training and resources for local staff are valuable for participating in the planning process, doing their jobs on a daily basis, and communicating with their boards and commissions. They reiterated the need for (and critical importance of) educating local rural agencies about how to be involved in the process of statewide planning to assure effective planning.

Byron Low, Intermodal and Statewide Planner for FHWA's Midwest Resource Center, said the feedback provided in Kansas will help them improve the workshop.

“The workshop was very helpful,” Low said. “This is a new topic for us, so we weren’t sure what to expect. We had too much presentation material and not enough time for discussion. Some of the material missed the mark … and needs to be continued on page 7.”

Get Ready for RABA

It may be coming soon to a budget near you.

by Lisa Harris

President Bush’s proposed 2003 budget includes a request to cut highway funding by 27 percent. The funding shortfall is attributed to the predicted decrease in the Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA).

What is RABA and how does it work?

TEA-21 created RABA to allow for an increase or decrease of transportation funding obligation levels based on changes in yearly gas tax receipts. In good years, any money above the authorization levels collected by the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) is spent solely on transportation. But RABA can also be decreased if the HTF revenues are less than expected. And that’s what we’re facing now.

Funding swings are a concern

This issue was discussed in a hearing of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee on Highways and Transit about the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) on Thursday, February 7, 2002. Called to testify were senior officials (Administrators) from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCA) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

While all witnesses demonstrated their staunch support for TEA-21, FHWA Administrator Peters acknowledged the difficulties and unpredictability RABA brings to the funding mix. She stated that “the calculation of the adjustment is not a policy call—it is a budget calculation based in law. As we discuss the reauthorization of TEA-21, we need to look for ways to smooth out current positive and negative swings that have resulted from the current formula.”

Representative Thomas Petri (R-WI), Chairman for the Subcommittee, stated that the subcommittee will work for improving the RABA calculation to avoid extremes in funding.

Don’t get out the red pen yet

Chairman Petri noted a bill that has been introduced in the House, H.R. 3694, the “Highway Funding Restoration Act” and if enacted the legislation would reinstate a minimum of $4.4 billion to the HTF in 2003. An identical bill has been introduced in the Senate, S. 1917. Other members of the committee emphasized their concerns about job losses in their home states as a result of the decrease in transportation funding.

How will RABA affect local projects in Kansas?

“It’s too soon to tell,” said Larry Emig, Local Projects Bureau Chief at the Kansas DOT. “We’ll have to see what happens with the House and Senate bills (mentioned above). But if those efforts are unsuccessful, our 2003 program will be reduced, and unfortunately, that means there will be fewer funds available for local projects. How much fewer, I don’t know.”

Emig said he will provide updated information about RABA when he meets with local agencies in the com-
What’s the Value of Your Infrastructure?

There is no cookbook approach for valuing infrastructure. This article examines two possible methods.

... by Tom Maze, Vice President, Howard R. Green Company .......

Editor’s note: This is our fifth article on GASB 34. The Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) sets Generally Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP) for governmental agencies. In Kansas, your city or county either prepares an annual GAAP financial statement or has a GAAP waiver from the Kansas Division of Accounts and Reports and prepares a simpler statement called KMAG.

Under GASB 34, over the next few years Kansas governmental agencies that use GAAP reporting must begin showing the value of infrastructure assets in their financial reports. Agencies may report assets using either depreciation methods or a “modified approach.” The benefits of the modified approach were discussed in our last article.

One of the most complex issues for agencies attempting to comply with GASB 34 is developing objective and consistent procedures for estimating monetary values for infrastructure assets (that is, “capitalizing” assets).

Whether an agency chooses to report assets by (1) depreciating their value based on historical costs or (2) using the modified approach outlined in GASB 34 (which applies asset management techniques), ultimately the agency must include the value of its infrastructure assets in its comprehensive financial reports.

Unfortunately, little research has been conducted to develop standardized methods for capitalizing infrastructure assets. In this article, we provide two possible approaches.

The first, relatively simple approach applies the perpetual inventory method (PIM) to depreciate the value of highway infrastructure assets through time. The second example is taken from work done by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) to capitalize bridges. The CalTrans method is based on engineering measurements of the condition of bridges and requires a bridge management system; such a method would be useful to agencies using GASB 34’s modified approach for reporting capital assets.

**Perpetual inventory method**

The perpetual inventory method, described by Barbara Fraumeni and exemplified in Table 1, is a depreciation method for valuing capital stock that can be applied to transportation infrastructure assets. PIM accounts for annual capital expenditures and assumes that existing capital assets depreciate in value at a standard rate every year.

The perpetual inventory formula (shown above) estimates the total value of infrastructure assets on a year-by-year basis. When using this formula, all capital investments should be expressed in constant dollars so that meaningful comparisons can be made across time. Constant dollars exclude inflation and express dollars in terms of a base year.

The example in Table 1 uses 1980 as a base year (as does GASB 34) and 100 million dollars as the base value of all transportation infrastructure assets (streets) in a mock Iowa municipality of 50,000 residents (based on Andrew Lemer’s study of typical infrastructure investments). Capital investments, expressed in con-
GASB 34 is only one reason to capitalize your transportation infrastructure

Capitalizing infrastructure assets like roads and bridges—that is, assigning a dollar value to them—may be useful beyond complying with GASB 34. For example, in addition to providing information that can be useful to infrastructure asset managers and decision makers, capitalizing transportation infrastructure may be helpful in garnering public and governmental support for transportation infrastructure funding.

Roads and bridges are intended to last for decades; therefore, failure to maintain their value saddles future generations with a deficiency they’ll have to pay. Adequate monies must be spent today to maintain the value of infrastructure assets for the next generation. This stewardship argument has been used with great success by public agencies in other countries (e.g., Australia and New Zealand) to garner increases in funding for their roads and bridges, even when faced with the tough political circumstance of a recession.

Capitalizing roads and bridges allows the public to understand the stewardship issue more clearly. Expressing the value of streets in dollar terms is generally more meaningful to people than expressing their value in engineering measures of “condition” or “performance” (e.g., inches of roughness per mile, condition indices, or other measures). This is especially true when year-by-year comparisons are made; the declining dollar value of a city’s streets is generally more meaningful to the public than, for example, a reduction in the streets’ condition index from 5 to 4. By tracking the dollar value of assets like roads and bridges, an agency may clearly demonstrate whether infrastructure is declining in value faster than new investments or reinvestments are being made.

CalTrans’s approach to valuing infrastructure

Although employing systems for managing assets, like bridge management systems, will generally fulfill GASB 34’s modified approach requirements for reporting capital assets, such systems do not provide a method for capitalizing infrastructure assets. CalTrans uses information from its bridge management system to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Capital Investment During Current Year</th>
<th>Infrastructure Assets at the End of Prior Year</th>
<th>Estimated Current Infrastructure Assets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>1,200,000</td>
<td>100,000,000</td>
<td>101,200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>99,155,760</td>
<td>101,655,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
<td>99,602,314</td>
<td>102,602,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
<td>100,529,747</td>
<td>101,529,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>500,000</td>
<td>99,478,846</td>
<td>99,978,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>800,000</td>
<td>97,959,273</td>
<td>98,759,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>96,764,336</td>
<td>97,514,336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>850,000</td>
<td>95,544,546</td>
<td>96,394,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>700,000</td>
<td>94,447,377</td>
<td>95,147,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>900,000</td>
<td>93,225,400</td>
<td>94,125,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>92,224,067</td>
<td>94,724,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2,700,000</td>
<td>92,810,640</td>
<td>95,510,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2,500,000</td>
<td>93,581,325</td>
<td>96,081,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
<td>94,140,483</td>
<td>96,540,483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>2,900,000</td>
<td>94,590,365</td>
<td>97,490,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2,400,000</td>
<td>95,521,060</td>
<td>97,921,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>2,200,000</td>
<td>95,943,054</td>
<td>98,143,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>2,800,000</td>
<td>96,160,564</td>
<td>98,960,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>2,550,000</td>
<td>96,961,561</td>
<td>99,511,561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35,150,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
derive the bridge infrastructure values required by GASB 34.

CalTrans manages its bridge network using Pontis (a bridge management system distributed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)). With Pontis, bridge inspectors regularly inspect and rate the condition of the various elements in each bridge in their network. CalTrans has developed a formula for converting the condition ratings for all the elements in a bridge into an overall dollar value for the bridge.

Typically, using Pontis, inspectors rate each element of a bridge according to five conditions: protected, exposed, attacked, damaged, or failed. CalTrans assigns weights, or factors, to these conditions according to their severity, from 1 (protected) to 0 (failed), and determines the cost of failure (replacement cost) for each unit (meter, square meter, etc.) of an element.

CalTrans then uses the equation on page 4 to determine the value of each bridge element.

In Table 2, the formula is applied to determine the current value of each element of a bridge. The values of all elements are summed to calculate an estimated value for the entire bridge. Note that the steel girder has 61 meters rated 1 (protected), 34 meters rated 0.75 (exposed), and 5 meters rated 0.5 (attacked). At a replacement value of 3,500 dollars per meter, the total current value of the girder is 311,500 dollars. To obtain a current, network-level estimate of the value of its bridges, CalTrans adds together the values of all bridges in its network.

**Summary**

In this article we have briefly summarized two methods for tracking the value of infrastructure assets. Either method would meet the requirements of GASB 34.

Many engineers and public works directors may view asset management and GASB 34 requirements as merely an academic exercise or as an activity that may be handled by their agency’s financial officer. However, we urge public works professionals and engineers to become engaged in the financial reporting of the value of the infrastructure assets they manage. Valuing assets over time (regardless of the method used) reflects how well infrastructure stewardship responsibilities were performed. The outcome could have significant implications on future resources allocated to the management of infrastructure.

The perpetual inventory method (as well as other depreciation-based methods) is a fairly simple approach to satisfying GASB 34 requirements. This method, however, provides only very aggregate, policy-level information. CalTrans’s method, although a more complex process, clearly provides information that is more useful to infrastructure asset managers and decision makers. The CalTrans example demonstrates that the process of capitalizing transportation infrastructure assets can be based on sound engineering practices, using asset-by-asset condition information to build a value estimate for an agency’s transportation infrastructure network.

**References**


Adapted with permission from the May-July-August 2000 issue of Technology News, Iowa Center for Transportation Research and Education.
Road Scholar Plans Move Ahead

Plans for the Kansas Road Scholar Program continue their progress to reality. The Kansas County Highway Association (KCHA), Kansas Association of Counties (KAC) and Kansas LTAP Advisory Committee have each endorsed preliminary plans for the certificate program for local highway and public works personnel. The certificates will be issued by the KCHA to any county highway employee completing the program. The certificate program will begin in 2002 with Levels I and II, and the initiation of Levels III and IV expected in 2004.

Application Being Developed
Applications—with a nominal application fee to offset administration expenses—will be required for participation in the program. Applications for the certificate program and courses leading toward the Level I Road Scholar Certificate will be handled by Kansas LTAP. The Level II Advanced Road Scholar certificate application will be handled by KAC.

A Road Scholar Program committee is developing the application form to be completed by any person interested in participating in the program, targeted for dissemination in April 2002. The form will allow applicants to identify training they have already taken that is eligible for "grandfathering." that is, training taken within a specific prior time period that counts towards the certificate. Starting now, each course offered by the LTAP program that meets the Road Scholar requirements will be identified as an eligible Road Scholar program in the course flyer.

The certificate program will begin in 2002 with Levels I and II.

Levels III and IV
The Level III Master Road Scholar Program and Level IV County Engineer Program are still under development with more specific plans to be finalized within the year. A program committee formed by KCHA will continue to meet throughout the year to continue implementation.

If you have any questions about the Kansas Road Scholar Program, call Pat Weaver at the Kansas LTAP at (785) 296-2595.

Local governments want to be consulted before statewide planning decisions are made, not after the fact.

What Next?
FHWA plans to revise the workshop based on the comments from the participants in Kansas and host another test-run in early May. Some national organizations, including the National Association of County Engineers (NACE), will attend that session. After further evaluation, the workshop may be given again in June, in Kentucky.
Keep What You’ve Got

Employees who are appreciated are more likely to stay in their jobs. APWA’s award programs help you recognize the cream of your crop.

. . . by Ira J. Allen . . . . . . . . . . . . .

The Kansas Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) recently instituted two new awards: the Excellence in Public Works Field Supervision award and the Excellence in Program Operations award.

There have been concerns that APWA was “just for the engineers,” but these awards are part of an APWA push to dispel such fears. Mike Fraser, of the Kansas Chapter of APWA, says, “The inspiration behind these two new honors was to recognize field personnel for their contributions to public works excellence. These awards will help give field personnel the credit they deserve for devising, implementing, and/or problem-solving public service programs.” Instituted in 1999, these awards have met with acclaim from the public works field—and gratitude from the winners. They are truly achieving their purpose.

What Are The Awards About?
The Excellence in Public Works Field Supervision Award is intended to recognize outstanding leadership and dedication in public works related activities. It is awarded to individuals who have a positive effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of governmental operations, and who improve the quality of life for those who live and work within that community. Eligibility for both awards is limited to staff of municipalities or other agencies that have at least one dues-paying member in the Kansas Chapter of APWA. The individual must have been employed by that agency in a supervisory capacity for at least one year. To nominate an individual or program for an award for the year 2002, you must submit an application (available from APWA) by December 2002. Awards for 2002 will be given at the Kansas Chapter of APWA’s Spring Conference in 2003.

Who’s Won So Far?
Jim Hill, Sanitation Superintendent for the City of Salina Sanitation Division, won the Field Supervision award in 1999, the first year it was available. Hill surmises he won this award for the new yard waste program he and his team implemented, but also says, “I’m not the one that made it happen—it’s the people who work here.” It is perhaps this humble attitude that makes his staff so loyal. Hill’s division has an incredibly low turnover rate—of his 19 employees, an unusually large number have been there over 10 years. The yard waste program Hill’s division implemented works with a relatively new private composting company in Salina, and collects leaves, grass, and even tree limbs. They are working to provide customers with plastic carts for collecting smaller yard waste; they began with 500 plastic carts, and have already distributed 4,000, with 500 more to be distributed shortly. However, they are also happy to collect yard waste in plastic bags; the carts are part of an attempt to be both cost- and environmentally-conscious.

Hill began working for the City of Salina as a laborer in the Street Department, in 1964. He worked his way up to foreman, and in 1975 was offered the position he holds now, that of Sanitation Superintendent. When asked what he liked least about his job, Hill laughed good-naturedly and said, “Angry customers.” But he hastened to add he generally likes interacting with customers. “I like to help them solve their problems [and] provide a good and reliable service to our citizens.” Fortunately, he says they don’t get many customer complaints. Hill also does field work with his crew. “If it becomes necessary for me to help, then I go help...I’m available all day to help [my crew] solve their problems, and I’m not afraid to get dirty.”

In 2000, Patrick Pruitt, Street Maintenance Supervisor for the City of Wichita, won the award for Excellence in Public Works Field Supervision. He won this award for the outstanding dedication and leadership he has shown in consistently performing above and beyond the bounds of his job description. In 1999, for example, he oversaw the Street Services section for five
months, in addition to doing his usual job, until the position could be filled. As the person who nominated him for this award wrote of him, "If there is one person who best exemplifies the spirit of public service, it is Patrick Pruitt." Pruitt himself, however, was "surprised, because I didn't even know somebody had submitted my name" when informed that he had won this award.

Like Hill, Pruitt rose through the ranks—he has worked for the City of Wichita for 24 years, beginning as an Apprentice Worker in 1977 and rising to his current position in 1994. One program Pruitt recently instituted has been the "neighborhood maintenance" concept, whereby the crews that he supervises (totaling 80 people) each maintain specific areas. This way, each crew can most efficiently respond to citizen input. Pruitt says this measure "gives employees a sense of ownership and improves morale." Pruitt’s least favorite part of the job is the disciplinary aspect that occasionally arises. His favorite part of the job? “Being able to help people out; seeing a job completed and done well.”

Good supervisors inspire loyalty. Award recipient Jim Hill’s division has an incredibly low turnover rate. Of his 19 employees, an unusually large number have been there over 10 years.

APWA Outreach is Appreciated

Both Jim Hill and Patrick Pruitt agree; the new APWA awards are definitely worthwhile. Both are APWA members, and both feel that APWA has reached out significantly to field personnel with these new awards. Pruitt says, “A lot of people, they forget about the field personnel, [but] this is great. Every year APWA tries to improve what they do.” A common feeling among field personnel has been that “APWA is more geared toward engineers,” but efforts like these awards and APWA’s informal roundtable discussions are helping to change that perception. Hill and Pruitt are both particularly positive about the roundtable discussions. Hill says, “I enjoy the roundtables because you hear a little bit about everything,” as well as sharing problems, solutions, and information.

Pruitt says of the awards, “Things like this are always encouraging; it lets you know you’re appreciated. It was a treat to get the award—[it] makes you appreciate a little more the way you do things.” Hill agrees, saying that winning this award made him “feel like a better person.” However, he adds again, “I didn’t win this award—the people who work for me won this award.” Overall, the reception for APWA’s new awards has been very good—many people are happy to see this organization reaching out to field personnel.

Jim Hill and Pat Pruitt do a great job, and there are many others like them in the public works field. It is good to see them getting the recognition they deserve.

For more information about this program, call 2002 Kansas Chapter President Brenda Herrman (City of Hays) at (785) 628-7353.

APWA Outreach is Appreciated

Both Jim Hill and Patrick Pruitt agree; the new APWA awards are definitely worthwhile. Both are APWA members, and both feel that APWA has reached out significantly to field personnel with these new awards. Pruitt says, “A lot of people, they forget about the field personnel, [but] this is great. Every year APWA tries to improve what they do.” A common feeling among field personnel has been

that “APWA is more geared toward engineers,” but efforts like these awards and APWA’s informal roundtable discussions are helping to change that perception. Hill and Pruitt are both particularly positive about the roundtable discussions. Hill says, “I enjoy the roundtables because you hear a little bit about everything,” as well as sharing problems, solutions, and information.

Pruitt says of the awards, “Things like this are always encouraging; it lets you know you’re appreciated. It was a treat to get the award—[it] makes you appreciate a little more the way you do things.” Hill agrees, saying that winning this award made him “feel like a better person.” However, he adds again, “I didn’t win this award—the people who work for me won this award.” Overall, the reception for APWA’s new awards has been very good—many people are happy to see this organization reaching out to field personnel.

Jim Hill and Pat Pruitt do a great job, and there are many others like them in the public works field. It is good to see them getting the recognition they deserve.

For more information about this program, call 2002 Kansas Chapter President Brenda Herrman (City of Hays) at (785) 628-7353.

**KC Metro Chapter’s Awards Program**

APWA’s KC Metro Chapter also has an award program to honor the best in their business. They started the program in 2001, to supplement their Heart of American award for outstanding service to the chapter over an extended period of time. They offer the same two awards as the Kansas Chapter—for excellence in field supervision and operations—and award them to two individuals each year. Awards are presented at the Chapter’s holiday party at the end of the year.

The Metro Chapter also has a third award for Excellence in Public Works (non-managerial). Two awards are also given in this category.

One of the recipients of the non-managerial award in 2001 was Monty Zimmerman of Lenexa. (The other recipient was Mark Koehn of Overland Park). Zimmerman was nominated for the award for exceptional customer service during a major fiber optic cable installation project that affected all city residents.

John Cromwell, Lenexa Public Works Project Development Manager said, “Monty is our Right-of-Way Manager. Two private fiber companies were digging up the utility right-of-way in people’s back yards to bury their lines. Residents were rattled—they’re just not used to having work done back there. Monty thought our department should serve as mediator between the fiber companies, the city and the residents.”

“His idea was a completely new approach to public service. And it worked great. Without his efforts we would have had a miserable time with this project,” Cromwell said.

The City also named Zimmerman Outstanding Employee of the Year in 2001 for this work.

For more information about the Kansas City Metro Chapter awards program, contact Patricia Hilderbrand, Awards Committee Chair, at (816) 513-2576.
KDOT and Audubon Society Hatch Partnership to Promote Prairie Vegetation and Cut Mowing Costs

... by Ira J. Allen .................

What could the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and the Audubon Society of Kansas possibly have in common? That was the question running through my mind when I learned that these two entities were partners in a roadside project that has possibilities for the entire state. However, as I later learned, KDOT and Audubon have a good deal in common; finding this common ground required only some thought, time, and effort on the part of representatives of both agencies.

One of Audubon of Kansas’s goals is “build pride in prairies,” and there are roughly 130,000 acres of state-administered roadsides in Kansas—prime potential for prairie vegetation. KDOT, on the other hand, receives some funding from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to participate in the Prairie Passage Program, which partners Kansas with Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. This program includes plans for protection and establishment of native grasses and wildflowers alongside highways, as well as for education of the public (and members of the DOTs) about their prairie heritage. These two facets—expertise, and residents. This project, recently named the Integrated Roadside Vegetative Management Program, has been underway for about a year, and has received a very positive public response to date.

KDOT and Audubon held a workshop in February 2001 to bring together interested parties throughout the state. The response has been heartening. Local experts in various fields have come forward to offer their assistance, and KDOT has been collecting seeds of wildflowers and grasses that will be used to supplement native stands in these pilot areas.

Roadside Vegetation: Not Just For the Birds

KDOT and Audubon’s partnership is intended to help reinvigorate and preserve prairie vegetation alongside Kansas’s roadways. One of the goals, as mentioned above, is to build pride in prairies. That is to say, this partnership hopes to build public appreciation for managing roadsides in a naturalist manner. One of KDOT’s goals in this project is to increase their efficiency in managing roadsides.

Managing tallgrass, a primary component of Kansas prairies, through this initiative will be very energy-efficient because it requires far less frequent mowing. Fred Markham, of KDOT, said, “it takes a tremendous amount of fuel to run all those mowers.” Mowing is the primary...
management tool the Department has for roadside areas. This initiative will use that tool more efficiently.

Fred Markham, Ron Klataske of Audubon of Kansas, and others advocate revised mowing techniques. Although a 30-foot swath on either side of the road must still be mowed several times a year for safety purposes, areas further from the road can be mowed as infrequently as once every 3-4 years. This maintenance schedule will resemble in some measure the natural burning process Kansas’s prairies historically underwent, sustaining “the vigor of the prairie.”

The part of this equation that should bring smiles to state accounted KDOT and Audubon into alliance with one another.

Audubon, naturally, is more interested in flora and fauna than roadside cost cutting, but this in no way hampers the partnership’s agenda. The initiative will help to provide a habitat for animals that would otherwise be hard-pressed to find a place to live and nest. Although one might think that the only interaction between birds and highways would be of the head-on collision variety, such is not the case. Klataske says there is “no reason to believe that stands of tallgrass near highways are more dangerous for the birds, but there is a strong reason to believe that more birds can nest and raise broods in unmowed vegetation.” This would include birds like the Bobwhite Quail and the Meadowlark, state bird of Kansas. Fortunately for Kansas, the native prairie has been resilient along roadsides, and we do not have to reseed most areas completely, as do some states with similar programs.

Throughout the state, drivers can see switchgrass, bluestem, Indiangrass, and many other species of native vegetation along the roadside. This initiative will institutionalize naturalistic management of these roadside prairie areas.

This partnership is working so well that both agencies are considering ways to cooperate in the future—and are discussing ways to involve more entities in future initiatives.

...But Partly For the Birds
In 1953, Aldo Leopold said, “The black prairie soil was built by the prairie plants, a hundred distinctive species of grasses, herbs, and shrubs; by the prairie fungi, insects, and bacteria; by the prairie mammals and birds; all interlocked in one humming community of cooperation.” Sadly, the situation has changed dramatically in most prairie landscapes. Ironically, the wonderful soil created by the prairie is perfect for agriculture, which destroys the prairie plant community. What prairie is left in many states is primarily situated along roadsides, by railroad tracks, on rocky hills, and in remote locations. It is this fact that brings...And Ultimately, for the Drivers
The money KDOT currently spends maintaining roadsides goes primarily toward mowing costs. Markham said, “This initiative puts the agency in the driver’s seat—we’re not fighting fire; we’re doing preventative mainte-

nance,” which allows personnel to use the funds saved for other purposes—like make improvements to the roads. And there are several other benefits that will accrue from this initiative to the average Kansas driver.

Perhaps chief among these are the benefits that can be expected during the wintertime. Although Kansas certainly doesn’t get as much snow as, say, Minnesota, anyone who has spent a winter here knows how the wind can create horizontal or ground blizzards. Swaths of tallgrass with the proper setback (30 ft. is recommended) can trap blowing snow, reducing the impact of 30+ mph winds that would otherwise buffet your car with snow and sometimes even dirt. This also can produce a snow fence effect, reducing snowdrifts on the road, and that can save time and money after a big snowfall.

As Klataske noted, “if the vegetation holds this snow, you reduce the cost of snow removal and you reduce the amount of salting— and hopefully reduce the human cost of winter accidents.”

There is some evidence from a similar effort—the Iowa Living Roadway Project—to suggest that such initiatives enhance tourism, as well as local appreciation of place. It would certainly be nice to get rid of the stereotype that Kansas is boring driving, and it is logical that more colorful and interesting roadsides could help dispel that. It also stands to reason that more interesting roadsides could help promote driver attentiveness and perhaps play a small role in reducing sleepy driver syndrome.

“When KDOT accepted the challenge that the Audubon Society gave us, a major goal was educating the public,” said Markham. The partnership has already held public workshops to discuss the project, and interested individuals are invited to contact Ron Klataske of Audubon (rklataske@hotmail.com) or Fred Markham from...continued on page 13 ➤
Nine Cities to Receive Funding for Bike/Pedestrian Paths

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) selected 20 projects for inclusion in its Transportation Enhancement program for Federal Fiscal Year 2003. This program provides funding for a variety of projects, including bike and pedestrian paths (see box below).

KDOT received 86 applications from local units of government for funding consideration. About one-fourth of the projects were selected for funding—20 projects, totalling $11.2 million. Funding for each project requires a minimum 20 percent local match.

Following is a list of the nine cities that received funding for pedestrian/bicycle projects:

**Pedestrian/Bicycle Projects**

- **Wichita**—Multi-use path along Little Arkansas River from 13th Street North and Ferrell to 21st Street North and Amidon;
- **Great Bend**—Multi-use path along the Arkansas River on the city levee system;
- **Derby**—Multi-use path from 71st Street and Rock Road west to Buckner Street then north to 63rd;
- **Olathe**—Multi-use path along Rolling Ridge Trail from Dennis Avenue and Ferrell Street to Hedge Lane and 131st Street;
- **Topeka**—Extension of Shunga Trail from the Landon Trail intersection to 10th Street;
- **Argonia**—Multi-use path to connect River Walk with Salter City Park;
- **Leavenworth**—Multi-use path linking Landing Park with Haymarket Square;
- **Buhler**—Multi-use path connecting Main Street with Wheatland Park;
- **Lyndon**—Multi-use path on east Sixth Street from U.S. 75 to Jones Park.

**Other Types of Projects**

Historical projects were selected for seven cities: Osage City, Fairway, the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/ Kansas City, Baldwin City, Harper, Hutchinson, and Abilene.

Scenic/environmental projects were selected for four cities: Topeka, Manhattan, Cimarron, and Lyons.

**Funding Cycles**

FFY 2002 funds were awarded to the Capitol Area Complex to provide for the construction of a pedestrian tunnel system connecting major buildings in the state office complex in Topeka. The next Transportation Enhancement project funding cycle will be for Federal Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005.

KDOT’s Office of Engineering Support will be hosting a funding workshop for Transportation Enhancement projects August 13-14, 2002, in Hays, Ks. Please register for the workshop by July 15.

Applications for FFY 2204 and 2005 must be postmarked November 8, 2002, or earlier. Awarded projects will be announced in May 2003.

For more information about the workshop—or the Transportation Enhancement program in general—call Kaye Jordan-Cain at KDOT at 785/296-7940.
KDOT/Audubon partnership, continued from page 11

KDOT (fred@ksdot.org).

This partnership is working so well that both agencies are considering ways to cooperate in the future, and ways to involve more entities in future initiatives. Klataske said, “There are all kinds of opportunities for spin-offs,” and Markham concurred: “We’re working together on the pilot projects, but we're expanding the partnership to other groups as well.”

So for all those that think inter-agency partnership is logistically impossible, or who feel their agency is simply too different from another’s for a partnership to work, let KDOT and the Audubon Society of Kansas be an example. The beauty of their partnership is its emphasis on common goals, and its focus on what is possible, rather than on what isn’t.

Swaths of tallgrass with the proper setback (30 ft. is recommended) can trap blowing snow, acting as a natural snow fence.

A Quick Guide to Local Road Funding in Kansas

If you need to bone up on the local highway funding programs available through KDOT, check out a handbook called Opportunities for Partnership with Local Units of Government. KDOT’s Bureau of Program Management prepares this handbook (and updates it annually) to provide local highway agencies with an at-a-glance guide to funding programs, what kinds of projects they cover, and what level of local matching funds is required. A few examples of project areas are substantial road maintenance projects, geometric improvements, safety improvements, and bridge replacement. See the handbook for a complete list.

KDOT’s Opportunities for Partnership with Local Units of Government can be downloaded from KDOT’s web site at www.ink.org/public/kdot/ or a paper copy can be requested from the Bureau of Local Projects by calling 785/296-3861.

Click, Listen and Learn

3 steps to convenient training

... by Lisa Harris ............

Sometimes it’s difficult to find the time and money to get out of the office and attend a training workshop. Now you have another option. The American Public Works Association (APWA) is collaborating with the National LTAP Association to provide training right from your desk. You can listen and talk through your telephone and view the presentation on your computer, via the web.

Sessions are two hours long and include a live Q&A session. Cost is $125 for each site. Groups can participate, for the same price, by connecting through a conference speaker phone and projecting the web image on a pull-down screen.

What if you don't have access to a computer? No problem. APWA can send you the visuals by mail, and you can participate by phone.

Several of the training sessions are taught by experts from LTAP Centers around the country. Upcoming topics are:

- safety training;
- conflict solving;
- GASB-34;
- de-icing; and
- risk management.

Dates are listed in our training calendar on page 14. If those dates don’t work for you, the programs are available for purchase on CD.

For more information, call Ashley Gann in APWA’s Education Department at (816) 472-6100 ext. 3511.

Attendance is limited, so don’t wait to call.

Swaths of tallgrass with the proper setback (30 ft. is recommended) can trap blowing snow, acting as a natural snow fence.
How Heavy is Too Heavy for the Roads of Kansas?
(10 min.) Provides a strong advocacy statement in defense of weight limits for trucks. Has descriptions and demonstrations of road movement under loads. Provides a brief review of road design factors. Best audiences are decision-makers and law enforcement officials. Produced by KDOT and the FHWA. —R. Lichtenberg

The Road and the Environment
(14 min.) An introduction to the practical considerations of road-building in an environmentally sensitive area. Covers how to include the public in the planning process and how to educate the public about factors engineers consider in building a safe and efficient road. Describes and shows low-impact construction techniques. This video is aimed at transportation and regulatory personnel and recreation and outdoor enthusiasts. It encourages viewers to take an active and appropriate role in the road planning process. Produced by the U.S. Forest Service. —L. Harris

Scheduled Lives, Stressful Drives
(22 min.) An excellent video for demonstrating the effectiveness of having access to real-time traffic data for planning a daily commute in a congested city. The narrator demonstrates several strategies for a commute from his workplace to his daughter’s day care center in the Washington, DC area. The commute time varies considerably depending on the route taken, the time of departure and the information available for choosing the route. The reasoning for each strategy is explained and evaluated. Produced in 2001 by the FHWA. —L. Harris

It’s About Time...Traffic Signal Management—Cost Effective Street Capacity & Safety
(13:22 min.) A thorough introduction to traffic signal management and how and why it is used in urban areas. Management software and strategies are described, and officials from several cities comment on the effectiveness of traffic management in their communities. As one mayor put it “Citizens get it—they say ‘you should have done this years ago.’” This is a good video to share with commissioners or the general public. Produced in 2001 by the FHWA. —L. Harris

Video Reviews

Calendar

... 2002 ..... 5/1—Chanute
*Culverts and Drainage 5/8—Hutchinson
3/11—Chanute
3/12—McPherson
3/13—Garden City
3/14—Hays
3/15—Topeka
3/26—Hays
3/27—Oakley
3/28—Dodge City
4/2—Topeka
4/3—Chanute
4/9—Hutchinson
*What’s New with the
MUTCD
3/13—Norton
4/3—Salina
4/10—Garden City
4/17—Topeka

*Work Zone Traffic Control for Maintenance Operations on Rural Roads (NHI Course), in
4/2—Hutchinson
4/3—Topeka

*Gravel Road Maintenance
4/2—Oakley
4/3—Dodge City
4/4—Russell
4/9—Independence
4/10—Emporia
4/11—Newton
4/16—Topeka
4/18—Salina

*April 9-11 Computerized Traffic Signal Systems (NHI Course), in Lawrence
April 24 Using Gut-Level Emotion to Make Safety Training Stick (Click, Listen and Learn)
April 24-26 KCHA/APWA Kansas Chapter Joint Meeting in Salina
Contact Norm Bowers at 913/782-2640 or Brenda Herman at 785/628-7350

April 25-27 NHI Course: Urban Drainage Design in Topeka

June 25-27 Culvert Design (NHI Course), in Topeka

July 17 Implementing GASB-34 (Click, Listen and Learn)

*June 23-25 KCHA/APWA Kansas Chapter Joint Meeting in Salina

May 21 Conflict Solving for the New Supervisor (Click, Listen and Learn)

May 21

For information on calendar items indicated with a * or to suggest a topic for a future LTAP workshop, contact:
Rose Lichtenberg
LTAP Training Coordinator
Kansas University Transportation Center
1530 W. 15th Street, Room 2011
Lawrence, KS 66045-7609
785/864-2594
or visit our Web site at www.kutc.ku.edu

To register for the APWA/LTAP “Click Listen and Learn” workshops, call Ashley Gann at (816) 472-6100 ext. 3511. Cost is $125 per site.

December 5
Risk Management and Tort Liability on the Roadways
(Click, Listen and Learn)
Free Resources

Check off your selections, fill in the bottom portion, and return this form to:
KUTC Materials Request, 1530 W. 15th St., Room 2011, Lawrence, Kansas 66045
or fax to 785/864-3199

Videotapes

Two videotapes or one-hour’s worth of material per lending request. Two week lending period.

☐ How Heavy is Too Heavy for the Roads of Kansas?
   10 minutes, by KDOT and FHWA.

☐ The Road and the Environment
   14 minutes, by USDA-Forest Service.

☐ Scheduled Lives, Stressful Drives
   12 minutes, by FHWA, 2001.

☐ It’s About Time...Traffic Signal Management—
   Cost Effective Street Capacity & Safety

Publications

You are free to keep these unless otherwise noted.

☐ Work Zone Safety: Guidelines for Construction,
   Maintenance and Utility Operations
   (44 pages) This pocket-sized laminated booklet covers basic requirements of Part IV of the MUTCD, focusing on short term work zones in rural areas and small cities. By the Institute for Transportation Research, 1997.

☐ Motorgrader Poster
   (large poster) An at-a-glance guide to avoiding common mistakes in grading roads. A useful addition to your shop bulletin board. Published by LTAP, adapted from materials by the National Association of County Engineers.

☐ Gravel Roads—Maintenance and Design Manual
   (64 pages plus appendices) Arguably the best guide out there for maintaining gravel roads. Color photographs, excellent descriptions of proper grading techniques, the works. Published by the South Dakota LTAP, 2000.

Order Form

Name
Phone number

Position

Agency

Street Address

City State Zip+4

☐ send materials indicated
☐ address correction
☐ add to newsletter mail list
☐ send KUTC 2001 Lending Library Catalog

*For all international requests, the requester must pay postage. We will notify you of the postage cost and will send materials after receiving payment.
Let us at the KUTC help you find the answers to your transportation-related questions.

KUTC, 1530 W. 15th St. #2011, Lawrence, KS, 66045
Call 785/864-5658  (fax 785/864-3199)
www.kutc.ku.edu

The Kansas Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) is an educational, research and service program of the Kansas University Transportation Center (KUTC), located in the University of Kansas School of Engineering. Its purpose is to provide information to local and county highway agencies and transportation personnel by translating into understandable terms the latest technologies in the areas of roads, highways and bridges.

The KUTC Newsletter is one of the KUTC’s educational activities. Published quarterly, the newsletter is free to counties, cities, towns, tribal governments, road districts and others with transportation responsibilities. Editorial decisions are made by the KUTC. Engineering practices and procedures set forth in this newsletter shall be implemented by or under the supervision of a licensed professional engineer in accordance with Kansas state statutes dealing with the technical professions.

Summer 2001 issue—Copyright © 2001 by the KUTC. All rights reserved. Reproduction of material in this newsletter requires written permission.

Director ......................... Joe Lee
Editor ......................... Lisa Harris
Contributing Writers ............ Pat Weaver, Ira Allen

KUTC Resource and Education Staff
Traffic and Hwy. Engineering .......... Joe Lee / Tom Mulinazzi
Road Surface Mgmt./Soils .............. Steve Cross
Bridge Structures, GIS and CAD .......... Carl Kurt
Mass Transit Planning .............. Pat Weaver / Alan Black
Specialized Transportation .............. Pat Weaver
Engineering Computer Applications ...... Mehrdad Givechi
Drainage ........................ Dave Parr
Environmental Engineering .......... Dennis Lane
Publications Editor (785) 864-2590 .... Lisa Harris
Workshops Coordinator (785) 864-2594 .. Rose Lichtenberg
Lending Library Coordinator (785) 864-5658 . Jennifer Noblitt

2001/2002 LTAP Program Advisory Committee
Ron Bonjour .......... County Engineer, Montgomery County
Dennis Clennan .......... Public Works & Engineering, City of Hutchinson
Larry Emig .............. Local Projects, KDOT
Steve Foust .......... Kansas Division, FHWA
Mark Huffhines .......... Kansas Division, FHWA
William Jacobs .......... Research and Materials, KDOT
Richard Maginot ... Business Administrator, Soldier Township
J. R. McMahon II .... Roads Superintendent, Miami County
Mike Novak .......... City Engineer, Lenexa
Richard Long .......... Kirkham, Michael, & Assoc., Louisburg
Gene Russell .......... Civil Engineering, Kansas State University
Richard Taford .......... County Engineer, Jefferson County
Warren Chip Woods .......... County Engineer, Lyon County

co-sponsored by the FHWA and KDOT