CTRE is supporting the Iowa DOT’s Office of Public Transit in developing a statewide plan for implementing intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies in public transit. In Iowa, public transit consists primarily of buses that provide either fixed-schedule or on-request services.

Dennis Kroeger, research specialist at CTRE, says, “Transit ITS technologies have the capability of reducing travel times and improving the overall operation of the transportation network. For example, automatic vehicle location systems can increase schedule adherence and reduce passenger waiting time.”

A step at a time
As one step toward developing a statewide transit ITS plan, in November 2001 the Iowa DOT held an expo of transit ITS technologies. Transit personnel from across Iowa met vendors of systems for automatic vehicle location, electronic fare collection using pre-paid cards, automatic passenger counts, and computer-aided dispatch and scheduling.

Next steps involve
1. Hiring a contractor to determine transit ITS technology needs and develop a business plan.
2. Developing a comprehensive record of available technologies and a plan for implementing needed and/or new technologies.
3. Implementing the plan.

The Iowa DOT is currently interviewing potential contractors. A contractor will be selected and the project will begin early in 2002.

For more information
For more information about the Iowa transit ITS plan, contact Dennis Kroeger, 515-294-8103, kroeger@iastate.edu, or Kay Thede, Iowa DOT’s public transit policy specialist, 515-239-1048, kay.thede@dot.state.ia.us.

For information about other ITS projects in Iowa, visit the Iowa DOT’s OnTrack website, www.iowaontrack.com. See page 10 of this issue for information about Transit Cooperative Research Program publications for loan from CTRE’s library.

Enhancing Iowa transit with technology

Iowa will host Heartland chapter of ITS America
ITS America, Heartland Chapter Conference University Park Holiday Inn West Des Moines March 26–28, 2002

In March Iowa will host the third annual conference of the Heartland chapter of ITS America. The chapter includes Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska. ITS policy makers, technicians, and academicians are invited to attend. The event will feature sessions concerning I-235 reconstruction, transit, 511 traveler information successes, incident management strategies, and multimodal information issues.

Watch ITS America’s website for registration information: www.itshearland.org.