Implementing Active Traffic Management Strategies in the United States

Limited public funding for roadway expansion and improvement projects coupled with continued growth in travel along congested urban freeway corridors creates a pressing need for innovative congestion management approaches. Congestion management is certainly not a new concept; systems to address congestion have been implemented in many areas of this country and include strategies such as variable message signs, HOV lanes, toll lanes, and network surveillance. These strategies, however, have largely been deployed so that they function independently and are often implemented only on preset schedules or manually in response to an incident. Active Traffic Management utilizes many of these same strategies but does so in concert in order to maximize the efficiency of transportation facilities during all periods of the day and during both recurrent and non-recurrent congestion. It stresses automation to dynamically deploy strategies to quickly optimize performance and enhance throughput and safety. Active Traffic Management has been described by the FHWA as "the next step in congestion management" and identified as areas of interest for future research. The proposed project attempts to build on the initial research performed by an FHWA scanning team and develop practical guidelines for implementing Active Traffic Management strategies in the United States.

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**Sponsor Organization**
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa
http://utca.eng.ua.edu
University Transportation Center for Alabama
P.O. Box 870205
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0205
USA

**Project Manager**
Fouad, Fouad H.
Phone: (205) 934-8430

**Performing Organization**
The University of Alabama at Birmingham
Dept. of Civil, Construction & Environmental Engineering
1075 13th Street South
Birmingham, AL 35294
USA
Phone: (205) 934-8430

**Principal Investigator**
Sullivan, Andrew J.
Fax: (205) 934-9855
Email: sull@uab.edu
Sisiopiku, Virginia
Phone: (205) 934-9912