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For Immediate Release: Thursday, June 30, 2016

Contact:

Annalysce Baker 470.891.2992

Working to keep Georgia moving.

GEORGIA DOT MARKS TWENTY YEARS OF NAVIGATOR 511 AND THE TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT CENTER



Pioneers of Georgia DOT NaviGAtor Intelligent Transportation System.

From left, Mark Demidovich, assistant state traffic engineer; Bayne Smith, former signal engineer; Joe Stapleton, former assistant state traffic engineer; Marion Waters, former state traffic engineer; Carla Holmes, former TMC operations manager; Burt Riddle, former assistant state traffic engineer

ATLANTA - When Atlanta won the bid to host the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, Georgia Department of Transportation knew that it was vital to address traffic management for the two million visitors that would come to the region. Since the late 1980s, Georgia DOT had been discussing the development of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) to maximize the efficiency of current and future transportation systems.



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In 1992—long before Smartphones, wireless communications and in-car GPS—Georgia DOT received federal assistance to develop a Transportation Management Center (TMC) that would use intelligent transportation systems that combine technology, information processing and communication to make travel easier and safer, and save time and transportation expenses. By January 1996, the Transportation Management Center was open and in April, NaviGAtor was launched.

Today, in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of Georgia DOT's Transportation Management Center and the Georgia NaviGAtor 511 program, the Intelligent Transportation Society of Georgia (ITS GA) held its monthly event at the GDOT Transportation Management Center. The TMC building and the NaviGAtor program operate 24/7 and have been in continuous service for over 175,000 hours.

At the event, original ITS pioneers—then-State Traffic Engineer Marion Waters and then-Assistant State Traffic Engineer Joe Stapleton—participated in an open discussion with former and current traffic operations leaders.

"Starting up a program like this at a time when traffic technology was in its infancy, provided some interesting challenges. We didn't have IP cameras or an Ethernet network - things we take for granted today," Waters said. "The program represented a significant milestone for Georgia. We went from building roads to actually managing the traffic and incidents on our Interstates. What we achieved was extraordinary."

Current Assistant State Traffic Engineer Mark Demidovich was also present during the startup years.

"Building a system from scratch with an unmovable deadline - the Olympics - was both challenging and rewarding," he recalled, "but we got it up and running successfully a few months before the opening ceremony."

Today's NaviGAtor 511 technology provides real-time speed, volume, and travel time data by using field devices like closed circuit television and video detection cameras, ramp meters and changeable message signs. The program has increased coverage from the original 37 Interstate miles in 1996 to over 300 miles.

Maintenance of NaviGAtor won a 2016 Best in ITS award from ITS America. The award focuses on innovation and what the future of back-end ITS will look like.

"Our comprehensive maintenance system was recently selected the top innovation by our peers," Demidovich said. "Through constant monitoring and preventative and responsive maintenance, we have reduced costs and maintained over 99 percent device availability for the 3,000 ITS devices on the system."

Today, the Transportation Management Center not only houses the NaviGAtor program, it is also the state's emergency operations center and home of the Highway Emergency Response Operator (HERO) program that focuses on incident management and motorist assistance to keep traffic moving on metro Atlanta Interstates.



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Users can call 511, or visit the website and sign-up for personalized alerts. Visit www.511ga.org. To download the 511 App and to see a short video about today's Georgia NaviGAtor 511 Service, visit www.dot.ga.gov/DriveSmart/Travel.

The NaviGAtor and HERO programs are sponsored by State Farm.

Motorists can access real-time, statewide, route-specific information on crashes, road work, traffic and weather through **Georgia** NaviGAtor 511 online or by phone. Callers can transfer to operators to report incidents or request assistance. The system can be also be used to access transit providers, major airports, rideshare organizations, tourism information and 511 systems in surrounding states. Call 511 or visit 511ga.org. For information on Georgia DOT, visit www.dot.ga.gov. You also may follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/GeorgiaDOT) and Twitter (http://twitter.com/gadeptoftrans).

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PHOTO CAPTION:

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