

MTC launches Affiliates Program with 27 initial members

March 25th 2014, Ann Arbor, Michigan U-M's Mobility Transformation Center — a major research partnership of industry, government, and academia that is laying the foundation for a commercially viable system of connected and automated vehicles — has launched its Affiliates Program with 27 initial members from a wide range of industries.

"Connected and automated vehicles hold the potential to dramatically improve the safety, sustainability, and accessibility of our mobility system," said Peter Sweatman, director of MTC.

"Through this consortium arrangement, we seek to engage the range of cutting-edge technology suppliers, thought leaders, and entrepreneurs required to inform and drive progress toward that transformative vision."

The affiliates represent a broad range of sectors that will play a role in shaping a viable system of connected and automated vehicles, including automotive manufacturing, vehicle communication devices, chips and hardware, and insurance, as well as companies engaged in such technologies as advanced modeling, big data acquisition, and intelligent transportation systems.

"There are many interrelated technical, legal, social, economic, regulatory and urban planning challenges ahead," said Sweatman. "Working with a diverse group of partners in industry and departments across our campus, each of which brings its own expertise and perspectives to the table, is critical to our success."

Affiliates commit \$150,000 each over three years in order to participate in selected MTC working groups and research programs, as well as key research reviews and an annual MTC Congress. They also will have selected access to the MTC's off-roadway and on-road test programs.

MTC is developing three complementary on-road vehicle deployments in Ann Arbor and across Southeast Michigan that will serve as test beds for partners to evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches and explore market opportunities.

In addition, MTC is collaborating with the Michigan Department of Transportation to build Mcity, a full-scale, 32-acre cityscape on campus for testing connected and automated vehicles and systems before they are tried out in real traffic. Mcity will have a formal opening on July 20.

The affiliates complement the founding group of 14 Leadership Circle companies, who have each committed \$1 million over three years to support the MTC and its programs.

MDOT and the Michigan Economic Development Corp. have also supported the center. The center is seeking federal funds for further support for the research agenda.

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