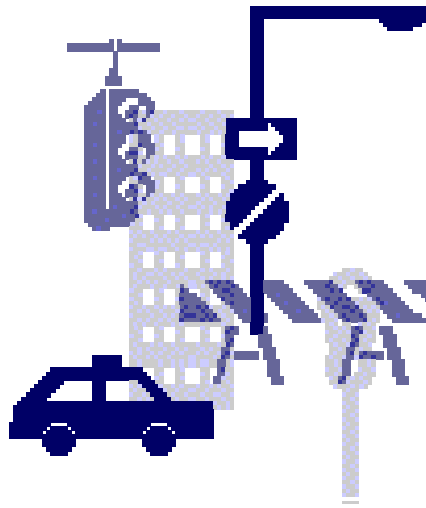


# **MATC Internship Program Report**

**2006**



**John Parizek**



**Traffic Engineering Team**

It was the end of my sophomore year, and summer as I had known it was about to change forever...

**This is where the magic happens . . .**



In each previous summer I was your typical student, sure I worked a summer job, but I always secured myself plenty of time during the week (and weekend) for a little time

spent relaxing. But as I said, this summer was unlike any other I've had. After enjoying one week in May to recover from the pressures of finals week, I was ready to begin working my Mid-America Transportation Center internship at Olsson Associates.

My first day brought a healthy dose of anticipation and anxiety. Upon arriving at Olsson at 7:30am I was asked to be seated in the lobby in anticipation of my new employee orientation and tour. During this waiting period the TV hanging on the wall across from me displayed my name on a new hires screen, which was slightly comforting. Eventually the tour came to an end at my desk, where I would be spending the majority of the next 13 weeks. I was pleased with my surroundings and impressed by the workspace given to me as an intern. I was also excited to meet each of the members of the traffic team, and to get to

know them. They have created an excellent work environment for my first engineering experience.

As the sequential weeks came I found myself truly enjoying both Olsson Associates and the work I was given. My first tasks as a traffic team member were mostly simple editing of plans to gain familiarity with Microstation. I had only minimal experience using AutoCAD and the first weeks brought adjustment and a lot of learning about the Microstation drawing platform.

As the weeks ensued, I continued working in Microstation, expanded my Microsoft Excel knowledge, and learned Synchro, to obtain traffic capacity



**The summer included multiple data collection trips, sometimes involving a trip in a corporate plane**

analysis. I was excited to complete my first traffic impact study this summer, which included obtaining traffic volumes for the study area, developing trip generation and distributions, signal warrant analysis, and representing my findings organized in figures. I was also responsible for writing the text of the report to further describe our recommendations to the client.

Throughout the summer I have gained respect for the MATC internship program by observing the high reputation it withholds in the professional engineering community. My very first week on the job I was greeted by a member of the urban development team at Olsson Associates and he said he would introduce himself now, because “they usually like to keep the MATC students around.” I was impressed by the program I had entered into, given this impression of MATC program.

I found my education this summer extending far beyond the possibilities of a classroom, and even beyond my assignments at work. I learned not only about traffic engineering, but also about the workings of a thriving engineering firm. I am confident the knowledge I gained this summer will enrich my collegiate experience and far increase my marketability upon graduation. The networking with fellow interns and leaders in the field will assuredly prove very valuable. Additionally, I believe the MATC intern field trip, to various firms and agencies, to be very beneficial in furthering our education. I was glad to get an idea of where my fellow interns have been working, in order to have a more educated view of the firms operating in the area.

**Presenting to fellow MATC students at Olsson Associates**



**On a data collection trip to Aurora, NE . . .  
having a little fun too!**

This summer has proved to be extremely valuable in my growth as a future civil engineer. I have learned about the workings of the engineering community, gained knowledge about various traffic engineering software, broadened my knowledge of what firms exist in the area, as well as gained employment as a student technician, to continue working at Olsson Associates throughout my undergraduate career. I have decided to pursue a career in traffic engineering after graduation, and am very pleased I applied to be a MATC intern this summer.

