

# U-M Connected and Automated Vehicle Initiative Announces Founding Corporate Partners

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**ANN ARBOR, Mich.** – A select group of companies will be the founding partners in the **University of Michigan’s Mobility Transformation Center** (MTC), a major public-private R&D initiative that aims to revolutionize the movement of people and goods in society the university announced Friday.

Spanning such sectors as auto manufacturing, suppliers, ITS, insurance, telecommunications, data management, and mobility services (see list below), the MTC’s Leadership Circle will join with government and academic partners to lay the foundations for a commercially viable system of connected and automated vehicles.

Plans call for implementing a working system in Ann Arbor by 2021.

“We are on the threshold of a transformation in mobility that the world hasn’t seen since the introduction of the automobile a century ago,” said Dr. Peter Sweatman, director of the MTC. “Only by bringing together partners from these sectors as well as from government will we be able to address the full complexity of the challenges ahead as we all work to realize the opportunities presented by this emerging technology. I am thrilled with the diversity and global reach of the new ecosystem of companies and agencies we have created. Our Founding Leadership Circle provides a unique nucleus for collaboration, deployment, and rapid learning in connected and automated mobility.”

Connected vehicles, commonly known as V2V, have been tested extensively by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute (UMTRI) in the USDOT's Safety Pilot Model Deployment in Ann Arbor. The results have been used to support the recent Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule Making announcement by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Connected vehicle technology, including vehicles that can communicate with one another and with the surrounding infrastructure (V2I), has the potential to avoid the majority of serious crashes when extensively deployed.

With the help of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), MTC is building on this two-year deployment of approximately 3,000 vehicles to create a major V2V deployment of 9,000 vehicles in Ann Arbor. The Center is also working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and industrial partners to provide sufficient V2I infrastructure in SE Michigan to support an unprecedented deployment of 20,000 connected vehicles.

"This is the next big thing for the state that put the world on wheels," said MDOT Director Kirk T. Steudle. "We are thrilled to join our partners in private industry and the University of Michigan in supporting groundbreaking research to keep our state in the lead in building the safest and most efficient vehicles in the world."

In addition to their definitive role for safety, connected vehicles will accelerate the deployment of one of the most exciting concepts in transportation today: vehicle automation. To make the most of this convergence, MTC is developing an off-roadway facility for testing connected and automated vehicles.

Occupying 32 acres on U-M's North Campus Research Complex, the **Mobility Transformation Facility** (MTF) is a unique off-roadway cityscape with the broad range of complexities that vehicles encounter in urban and suburban environments. Scheduled to be completed this fall, it includes 4 lane-miles of roads with intersections, roadway markings, traffic signs and signals, sidewalks, benches, simulated buildings, streetlights, parked cars, pedestrians and obstacles such as construction barriers. This facility was designed and constructed in partnership with MDOT and is available to Leadership Circle members to work collectively on big system issues as well as on specific technological developments.

With the goal of accelerating progress in the development and implementation of connected and automated technology, Leadership Circle members will work together to identify emerging opportunities as well as the barriers to realizing them, anticipate and help shape key standards and regulations, and help guide the direction of the research.

“The collective potential of our founding Leadership Circle for innovation and constructive public-private engagement is immense,” said Sweatman. “Working together, this new group of partners will provide a voice of reason in this exciting technological landscape, while moving forward with a sense of urgency for accelerated deployment.”

MTC’s research program will draw on a wide range of expertise from the University of Michigan’s schools and colleges.

“We have key strengths in engineering and science, but the challenges ahead are not just technical,” said Sweatman. “We will engage faculty from across campus to address interrelated legal, political, regulatory, social, economic, and urban planning issues.”

Founding members of the Leadership Circle are each committing a total of \$1 million over three years to create a vibrant R&D ecosystem, and to support the MTC and its programs. A broader range of companies will engage in the work of the Center as Affiliates.

“With more than 375 public and private automotive R&D centers representing organizations from around the world, extensive manufacturing facilities, and an exceptional pool of talent, Michigan is uniquely positioned to spark the transformation of mobility worldwide,” said Nigel Francis, senior vice president at the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Automotive Office. “The MTC is playing a critical role in catalyzing the diverse technologies, talent, and resources from this region and beyond needed to accelerate progress and usher in a new era of mobility.”

The founding members of the MTC Leadership Circle are:

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*Join the conversation: **#GoDriverless**. For more information on the University of Michigan's Mobility Transformation Center, please visit [www.mtc.umich.edu](http://www.mtc.umich.edu).*

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