

## Workshop for Transportation Forecasters

On September 22-23, 2009, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the statistical agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation, held an international workshop on transportation forecasting in Washington, D.C. This two-day workshop, whose theme was *Tools, Techniques and Information to Improve your Forecasts*, was sponsored jointly with the International Institute of Forecasters.

Steve Smith, Deputy Director of BTS, introduced the keynote speaker, John V. Wells, who is the Chief Economist of U.S. Department of Transportation. Jack provided insight into the planning and forecast directions and needs of the Department. Additional speakers for the workshop were: Paul Bingham, IHS Global Insight; Keith Ord, Georgetown University; Martin Wachs, RAND; Arthur Rypinski, US Department of Transportation; Owen Evans, ESRI; Brian Monsell, US Census Bureau, and Rosalyn Alleman, US Department of Transportation. The sessions covered such topics as: incorporating global economic trends into forecasts, adjusting for seasonality, measuring forecast accuracy and the quality of forecast model, conducting Geographic Information Systems (GIS) spatial analysis, finding transportation data, studying climate change and other long-term impacts, and understanding the political aspects of forecasts.

The session were chaired by the BTS members of the workshop organizing committee: Peg Young (General Chair), Jeffery Memmott, Ken Notis, David Chien and Pheny Weidman. Approximately 40 transportation forecasters, planners, analysts and researchers at the local, state, national, and international levels participated in the workshop. Benito Flores, Texas A&M University, served as the representative of the Institute at the workshop.