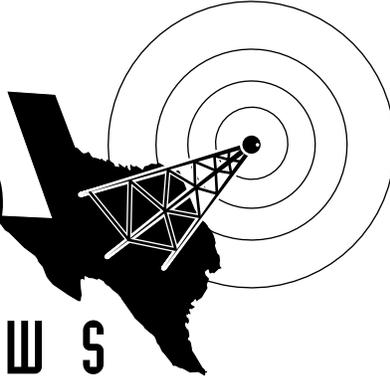


ITS Texas News



Message from the President

Issue 5

May 2000



7th annual ITS Texas meeting

ITS Texas held its 7th Annual Meeting last November. The meeting began with a training session taught by Ed Seymour of the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) and Walter Kraft of PB Farradyne. This course was a three quarter-day format of the ITE Management and Operations course. The first evening was highlighted by a reception at TTI's new TransLink® Research Center Laboratory.

Thursday kicked off the technical program with keynote presentations from Michael Dennis of ITS America, Carol Rawson of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), and Michael Walton of the University of Texas. Thursday and Friday continued the technical program. For the first time the meeting had concurrent sessions to give our membership a greater choice of technical sessions. There were more than 40 speakers on the technical program leading sessions, ranging from freeway management to rural ITS and telecommunications to low-cost ITS solutions that work.

The meeting closed with a business lunch and annual awards program. By all accounts the meeting was a great success. Attendance was up 10 percent from the year before with a record number of presenters and a large exhibitor display. We expect to continue the tradition of excellent annual meetings in the Dallas area this coming November for our 8th Annual Meeting. Hope to see you there!

And the winner is...

ITS Texas presented achievement awards to six recipients last November at the chapter's annual meeting. All ITS Texas members were invited to submit nominations, which were evaluated by an awards committee. The awards recognized individuals or organizations for outstanding contributions to ITS policy planning, design deployment or research.

Former ITS Texas president, Walter Ragsdale, presented the following awards:

- The City of Richardson—Advanced Enforcement Technologies Program,
- TxDOT's Traffic Operations Division—Statewide Integrator Project,
- TTI—Translink Research Laboratory,

I would like to welcome everyone to a new year in ITS Texas. Texas has been at the forefront of ITS since the Mobility 2000 Conference in Dallas a decade ago. We are the only state with both a Priority Corridor Program and a Metropolitan Model Deployment Initiative.

But with all that history, what makes this time truly exciting is the number of people involved in ITS today! From the Valley to the Panhandle, there are increasingly more areas deploying ITS solutions to improve the safety and mobility of the Texas transportation system.

The goal of ITS Texas is simple. This chapter is here to support the ITS community in Texas. The ITS Texas Board of Directors has developed four themes and associated goals to advance ITS and the ITS community:

- **Membership.** The chapter would like to achieve 100 paid members in our first-year membership drive and achieve 150 participants at this year's annual meeting.
- **Deployment.** The chapter will establish a resource for information on successful deployments around the state. (The board is developing the specifics. Your ideas are welcome!)
- **Professional Development.** The chapter will continue financial support to recognized ITS America Student Chapters in Texas. We will also revive the student ITS

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More federal ITS money for Texas

Texas was earmarked for several million dollars of ITS funds for the fiscal year 2000. Four cities were identified, along with the "State of Texas," for an ITS Integration Component of the ITS Deployment Program earmark—College Station, Corpus Christi, Fort Worth and Houston. In addition, TTI's TransLink® program was an earmark recipient under a more general ITS program.

TxDOT is proposing eight separate projects using the "State of Texas" earmark funds. Seven of those proposals are for architecture, planning and integration projects in Amarillo, Atlanta, Austin, Childress, Dallas, El Paso and Tyler. The eighth proposal is to enable motor carrier registration, insurance filings and apportioned (IRP) applications and renewals via the Internet.

As with last year's earmarked ITS projects, the local areas will integrate existing systems and work cooperatively with their transportation and emergency service providers.

Membership Drive

The year 2000 marks a new membership program for ITS Texas. In past years, the membership dues have been part of the annual meeting registration. Based on input from the membership, the ITS Texas Board of Directors has separated the membership from the Annual Meeting, thus resulting in our first membership drive!

We have kept the individual membership dues at \$25. Membership includes

- a \$50 reduction in the annual meeting registration,
- a direct mailing of three ITS Texas newsletters,
- voting privileges on ITS Texas chapter business,
- e-mail notification of specialty conferences and breaking news in the ITS field, and
- excellent opportunities to network with other transportation and ITS professionals.

To date, the year 2000 membership drive has been very successful! We are nearly three-quarters of the way to our goal of 100 paid members. Please pass the word to friends and colleagues that may not have registered yet.

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scholarship program and will continue to offer ITS training opportunities at the annual meeting and/or at mid-year specialty conferences.

- **Outreach.** The chapter will encourage information exchange among ITS programs in our neighboring states. We will make ITS information available to elected officials preparing for the upcoming legislative session.

I challenge each of you to help our chapter achieve these goals by becoming a member, volunteering a presentation topic for the annual meeting (online at itstexas.tamu.edu), or by speaking to one of the student chapters. Our success this year is dependent upon you. Make this year a rewarding experience.

TransLink train monitoring

TTI's TransLink® research staff has been designing and testing a new system for monitoring train movements in an urban corridor. The system is deployed in the Wellborn Road Corridor in College Station using Doppler radar detectors installed on the right-of-way to measure train speed, direction and length. This information is used to predict train arrival and departure times at six grade crossings in the College Station area. Using this system, research projects will examine how train arrival and departure times can be used to improve emergency vehicle response times and the traffic signal preemption process. Research results have already helped the City of College Station to improve traffic signal operation and safety at an intersection adjacent to one of the crossings in the Wellborn Road Corridor.

For more information about the training monitoring system and other research projects, visit the TransLink® web site at translink.tamu.edu or contact Roelof Engelbrecht or Leonard Ruback at (979) 845-1536.

Your ad here!



Contact Mark Olson
(512) 916-5966
mark.olson@fhwa.dot.gov

IMPORTANT!

If your membership dues were returned to you, we apologize for the mix-up. The problem is resolved. Please resubmit your dues to the **same** address.

Awards—continued from page 1

- Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition—Regional Incident Management Conference,
- Koorosh Olyai, Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART)—formation of a regional ITS steering committee in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and
- Poonam Wiles, TTI-Arlington—development of the Fort Worth Regional ITS Plan.

Guidelines will be provided later for this year's awards program. ITS Texas members are encouraged to submit nominations.

TransGuide news for San Antonio

TxDOT's TransGuide Operations Center initiated its Travel Times program last November. Users view travel times in a variety of interactive formats—a common travel timetable, a personal route selector, a dynamic map-based route builder, and freeway corridor-based travel timetables. The site is available at www.TransGuide.dot.state.tx.us.

TransGuide also displays travel times on dynamic message signs on freeway mainlanes. The travel time system is fully automated

using data from TransGuide's traffic sensors. Times are calculated automatically using real-time point speed information, and messages are updated every minute.

TransGuide added 27 miles to its coverage area in 1999 and has already added 10 miles in 2000. The total coverage area is up to 63 miles. An additional 10 miles are under construction on U.S. 90, and 15 more miles will be constructed later this year.

TransVISION nears completion

The TxDOT Fort Worth District's new traffic management center is approximately 95 percent complete. According to Abed Abukar, assistant director of Transportation Operations, "This system represents good state of the practice rather than the state of the art."

Although construction of the TransVISION building began in June 1998, progress was delayed when the contractor, S. Hakim, Inc., defaulted on the project in February 1999. Douglas E. Barnhart, Inc., restarted work in April, and the facility will be completed in June at a cost of \$8.5 million.

The systems integration for TransVISION's electronic components is contracted to Lockheed Martin, and their work is on schedule and in accordance with plans.

Once operational, this system will be connected to TxDOT's Dallas District and similar systems deployed on city arterial streets in both counties. This will enable the Fort Worth-Dallas area to react to traffic problems on both sides of the county line. TransVISION will provide motorists with substantial savings in delay reduction and will contribute to achieving cleaner air.

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ITS Texas Membership Form

Name (last, first, middle) _____

Title _____

Organization _____

Business phone _____

Business fax _____

E-mail _____

Areas of interest _____

Alma mater(s) and degree(s) _____

Transportation Calendar 2000

TTI 2000	May 23–24	College Station
TransLink Partners Meeting	May 25	College Station
TxDOT Planning Conference	May 30–June 2	Houston
TxDOT Research Meetings	June 5–9	Houston
Texas 2000 Transportation Summit	June 21–23	Arlington
TexITE Summer Meeting	June 22–24	College Station
ITE Annual Meeting	August 6–9	Nashville, TN
Rural ITS Conference	August 13–16	Branson, MO
TxDOT Transportation Conference	October 9–11	College Station
ITS Texas Annual Meeting	November 15–17	Dallas

For more information on any of the articles featured here, contact the Information & Technology Exchange Center, Texas Transportation Institute, Texas A&M University System, 3135 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-3135.

The annual membership is \$25 (2000 calendar year). Please fill out the requested information, cut out this form and return it to the return post office box address below. Make checks or money orders payable to Treasurer, ITS Texas.

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