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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

ITS Texas Members and Friends,

I hope this newsletter finds you and your families healthy and safe. What a difference a few months can make! It seems like only yesterday that the ITS Texas Board was working on our agenda and planning social activities for this year's Annual Meeting in November. The ITS World Congress was coming back to the US in October. And many of us were focused on how we could use ITS to relieve congestion and improve the reliability of our roads in Texas. Yet we find ourselves today with the ITS Texas Annual Meeting, ITS World Congress and the growing traffic congestion issues we've all become accustomed to in Texas suddenly looking so much different.



In May, as the chances of holding an in-person annual meeting started to look less and less likely, the ITS Texas Board surveyed members to gather feedback from everyone on how best to proceed. We appreciate the input from everyone that participated in the survey. We heard from our members that there was a lot of interest in having an abbreviated virtual event. We also know that many agencies may be facing cuts to training budgets and the need for a low-cost or free event is important this year. The ITS Texas Board is excited to announce that we will be holding a Virtual Annual Meeting on November 10th. Please see the newsletter for more details. We'll also be addressing new challenges that we see by not having an in-person annual meeting, such as how to conduct our ITS Texas board and officer election. We'll continue to do our best to update everyone as we move forward.

Although we'll miss seeing our members this year in San Marcos, we look forward to holding the ITS Texas Annual Meeting back in San Marcos in the 2022. And we are very excited to offer our second ITS Texas/TexITE Joint Meeting in the fall of 2021 in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. We had great reviews from both ITS Texas and TexITE members on the first joint meeting in Houston in 2018, and we look forward to gathering in person with everyone next year.

Please stay safe in the coming months as we all work to put the pandemic behind us! And don't hesitate to reach out to me or any members of our ITS Texas Board if you have any questions or suggestions for this year's virtual annual meeting event.

Tom Fowler
ITS Texas President

2020 ITS TEXAS ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE AND SURVEY

After some careful thought and monitoring of other professional organizations relative to their conferences, the ITS Texas Board of Directors decided to cancel the in-person 2020 ITS Texas Meeting that was planned for San Marcos on November 9-11, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead, the Board will host an abbreviated virtual version of the 2020 ITS Texas Annual Meeting on Tuesday, November 10, 10AM-3PM at no cost. The Board conducted a survey to gauge members and vendors' willingness and interest about the annual meeting. The survey was available online from May 29th to June 15th. There were 26 respondents and key takeaways included:

- 50% were public agencies
- 30% would devote half day and 19% would devote up to 3 Hours
- 42% would pay up to \$50 and 31% would pay up to \$100

- 68% were interested in Safety or TSMO sessions
- Nearly 30% were willing to sponsor up to \$100 or \$500
- 20% were willing to sponsor if given a 5-minute 'commercial'

The full survey is available on the ITS TX [website](#). The ITS Board will consider these survey findings as they plan the first virtual meeting in ITS TX history! More details to come soon.

Meanwhile, we would like to announce our call for presentations for the virtual 2020 ITS Texas Annual Meeting. Please submit your presentation abstracts to webmaster@itstexas.org by Labor Day, September 7 (250 word limit). We plan to select a limited number of presentations and are particularly interested in how ITS has been applied to safety, TSMO, ATMS, incident management and special events, and performance measures. We are also interested in the impact of the pandemic on the transportation system and how ITS has been used during this time.

2020 ANNUAL SUMMER TRAINING

ITS Texas is continuing our summer training series, but this year will be a 'late' summer webinar due to COVID-19. We hope to be able to go back to our in-person format in 2021. This year's webinar will be 2 hours and will feature key speakers from CATT Laboratory and INRIX. They will share about recent COVID-19 efforts and the new HELP platform coming soon to TxDOT. Be sure to set aside the date to attend the free webinar on Wednesday, September 9th starting at 1:30 PM CST. More details to come!

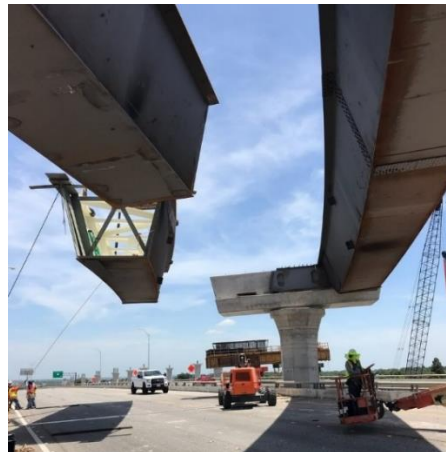
2019 ITS TEXAS AWARD WINNERS

The section highlights the 2019 ITS Texas Project Award winners, which recognizes teams or groups (e.g., a city, agency or company) for a project or other contribution in the fields of ITS policy, planning, design, deployment, research or education. These awards were presented by the ITS Texas Board of Directors and Membership on November 15, 2019.

Project: TxDOT Austin District Mobility35 Construction Communications Assistance Team (CCAT)

Contact Information: John Nevares, TxDOT Austin District, john.nevares@txdot.gov, 512-832-7053
Tom Fowler, Kimley-Horn, thomas.fowler@kimley-horn.com, 512-418-4535

For the next decade, the TxDOT Austin District Mobility35 Program will be constructing improvements on and along 88 miles of Interstate 35 with the goal of improving mobility and connectivity in the TxDOT Austin District. The Construction Communications Assistance Team (CCAT) is a group within the Mobility35 Program that seeks to minimize the impacts of construction to the public. CCAT aims to fulfill this purpose by engaging regional partners, efficiently coordinating various construction efforts, improving traffic operations and safety within the project limits, and informing the travelling public of construction-related closures. In its first three years of existence, CCAT has established an approach that mitigates the negative yet largely unavoidable side effects of major road construction and has saved the traveling public tens of thousands of hours of delay. Highlights of how the team uses ITS and TSMO strategies during major freeway construction closures in the Austin District are included below.



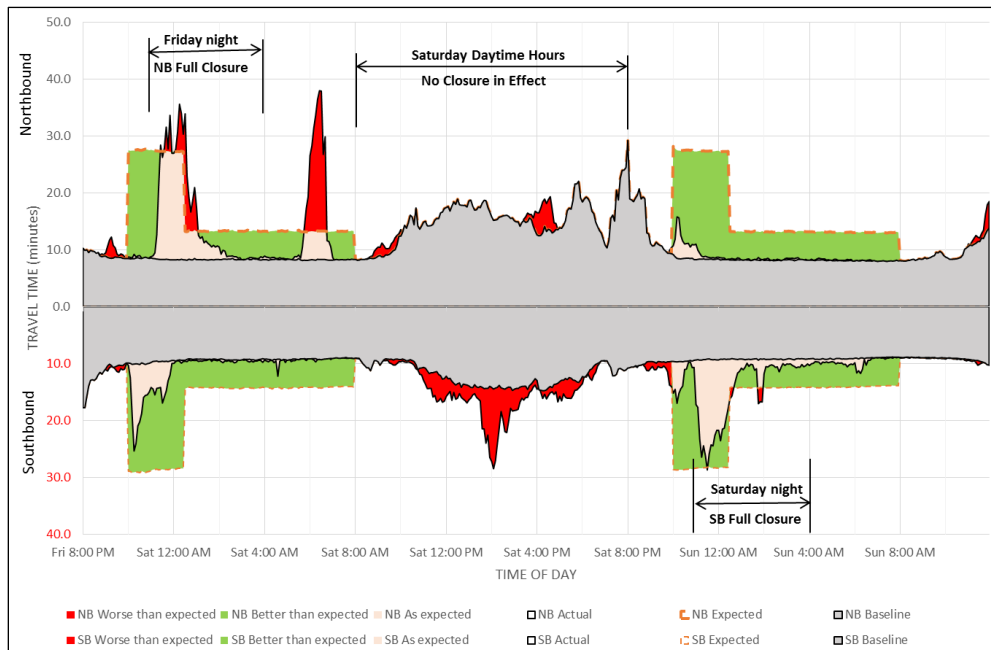
Before the Closure – CCAT works with contractors to use a predictive modeling tool, developed in coordination with the Center for Transportation Research at the University of Texas, that collects data through smart work zone deployments to identify closure windows that will have the least impact on traffic. The team implements a coordinated strategy for alerting the public of closures, including use of permanent and portable dynamic message signs (DMS), social media, third-party navigation services, and a project [website](#). CCAT also coordinates with local cities to develop arterial signal timing plans to handle detoured traffic from freeway closures and deploy portable DMS on local streets that will be impacted by the closure.

During the Closure – CCAT monitors closures from the Mobility35 Traveler Information System (TIS) center, a construction traffic management center (TMC) implemented at the TxDOT Austin District to monitor major freeway closures, provide real-time information on delays to the public, and coordinate with local cities to adjust signal timing on frontage roads and other arterials used as detours. An end-of-queue system is deployed to warn travelers of stopped traffic and TxDOT's HERO freeway service patrol vehicles are deployed to respond to incidents or disabled vehicles in the active work zones.



Mobility35 Traveler Information System (TIS) Construction TMC is activated during major construction closures.

After the Closure – CCAT analyzes performance metrics collected during the closure to assess the level of delay experienced by travelers and develop a scorecard for each closure. The scorecards clearly show how the closure performed in terms of delay and safety. After action meetings are conducted by the team to identify potential improvements for future closures. CCAT Mobility Coordinators work closely with TxDOT Area Offices and contractors to implement the lessons learned on future closures.



The Mobility35 CCAT team develops a scorecard for each major closure to compare expected travel delay against actual delay and seek opportunities for improvement on future closures.

During a typical 2-night closure event, when CCAT strategies are used to identify best times for closures and get the word out to the public, the Mobility35 program often sees an approximate 20% reduction in the number of vehicles traveling through the work zones during the closures and thousands of vehicle-hours of traffic delay saved. As lessons learned are shared after each closure, the closure performance in terms of vehicle delay also tends to improve over the life of a particular construction project.

CCAT has also been testing new strategies for reducing delay and improving safety in work zones. The team has piloted tests of apps to advertise closures, looked at lighting systems to improve visibility in work zones, and compared several third-party travel time data sources. The combination of engineers, planners, construction specialists, public relations professions and researchers that make up CCAT allow the team to evaluate technology and strategies from many unique perspectives.

Project: TxDOT-Houston TranStar: Galveston-Pt. Bolivar Ferry Real-Time Travel Time and Ferry Location Information

Contact Information: Valerie Taylor, TxDOT-Houston TranStar, Valerie.Taylor@houstontranstar.org, 713-881-3283
Mike Vickich, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, M-Vickich@tti.tamu.edu, 713-613-9219

The TxDOT Houston District and the Texas A&M Transportation Institute jointly developed and implemented a project to provide real-time ferry crossing travel times and ferry boat location information. This system is used for internal TxDOT situational awareness, to provide travel time updates on approach to the ferry landing, and for public consumption on the Houston TranStar website.



The project provides reliable pre-trip and in-vehicle traveler information to the general public. Ferry trip travel times are calculated using anonymous Bluetooth Low-Energy signals (but previous system evaluations included “regular” Bluetooth and Wi-Fi signals). The system consists of Bluetooth-based field-readers located at key locations on approach to the ferry landings. Data flows via wireless links or via connections to agency fiber optic data links back to TranStar where a back-office process filters the unique Bluetooth IDs and matches those IDs at points in the network. Individual travel time matches are then aggregated for reporting purposes. This application is especially challenging due to tracking vehicles in a queue and distinguishing those vehicles which are able to bypass the normal queue using a priority (medical-based) pass system. The travel time information is available on the Houston TranStar website and Houston TranStar iOS and Android apps as well as automatically posted to TxDOT roadside DMS. The roadside DMS posting has proved to be an important tool to provide information directly to tourists which may not be fully aware of the availability of the travel times on their mobile devices.

The ferry boat location information provides an additional resource to TxDOT staff to better manage operations during periods of high demand. The boat location information is provided via the Marine Automatic Identification System (AIS) which uses ship-mounted transponders emitting real-time GPS and heading information to a shore-based receiver at the Galveston Ferry Office. The AIS system data representing ferry boat location, speed and heading information is translated to maps on the [website](#) and apps to allow the public a quick glance of where each ferry is located during the 2.7-mile passage between Galveston Island and the Bolivar Peninsula. The public can also see how many ferries are in service on the maps. Providing the ship channel crossing travel time and ferry boat location information to the public further illustrates TxDOT fulfilling one of the agency goals of focusing on the customer; which in this case are the citizens using the Galveston-Pt. Bolivar ferry system for their daily work commute as well as tourists from throughout the world visiting the Galveston area.

Project: City of Frisco: Autonomous vehicle pilot, Autonomous personal delivery device testing, and Waze Connected Citizens Program enhancements

Contact Information: Brian Moen, City of Frisco, BMOen@friscotexas.gov, 972-292-5450

Autonomous Vehicle Pilot

The City of Frisco completed the first autonomous vehicle deployment in Texas, which carried passengers on public roadways, July 2018 – March 2019. The pilot project resulted in 3,181 trips with 4,895 riders. It provided Frisco residents and staff with an opportunity to learn about autonomous vehicles. Following completion of the project, the City of Frisco worked with the Texas A&M Transportation Institute to conduct a survey of Frisco residents and users that measured consumer acceptance of autonomous vehicles (see [research published](#) in August 2019).



Autonomous Personal Delivery Device Pilot

The City of Frisco has been working with the FedEx Corporation as a pilot city to complete testing of FedEx's SameDay Bot. The SameDay Bot is expected to address last mile delivery needs for FedEx and their business partners. Testing occurred on a 3-mile route along Legacy Drive in Frisco.

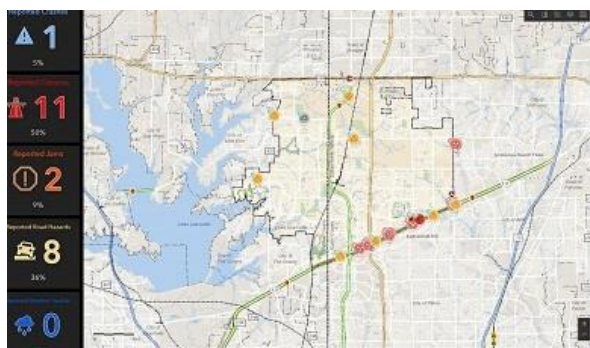
Starship Technologies Personal Delivery Device Deployment

In [May 2020 Starship Technologies](#) began making grocery and food deliveries via Starship's PDD. The recent health crises and college campus closure prompted Starship to accelerate their plan to move operations to Frisco. City engineers are working with Starship to provide access for the robots to travel across major roadways at signalized intersections using a connected vehicle solution to request pedestrian service.



Waze Connected Citizens Program

Frisco continued further development of their Waze dashboard, which is used by staff to maintain situational awareness regarding traffic conditions in Frisco. The dashboard leverages the two-way data sharing with Waze through their Connected Citizens Program (CCP) to display traffic congestion, crashes, construction, and events reported by Wazers, including the City of Frisco. Frisco's efforts to share reports of crashes called into their 911 dispatch center have also inspired nearly 40 other 911 centers in the DFW region to use the Waze platform to enhance their situational awareness.



ITS TEXAS ON THE WEB

Have you visited the [ITS Texas Website](https://www.itstexas.org) lately? It has recently been updated. We are always working to improve the website and make it the source of information for you. Here are just a few highlights:

2020 Annual Meeting Survey Results (see summary in above Annual Meeting Update and Survey section).

New 2021 Sponsor Ad Fee Options (see next section).

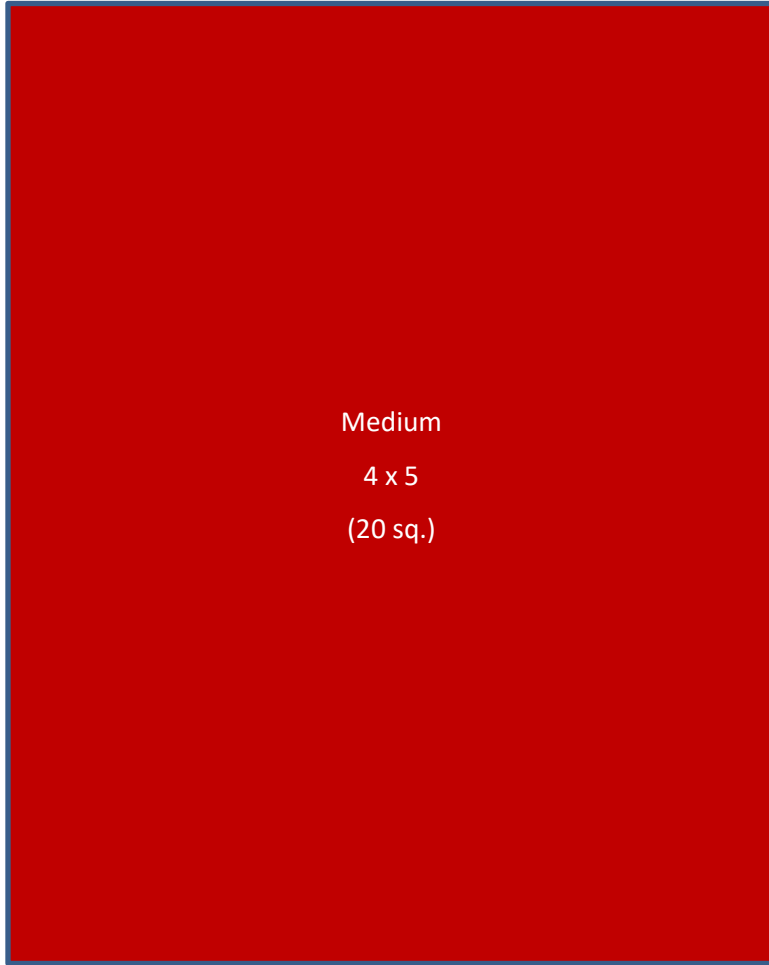
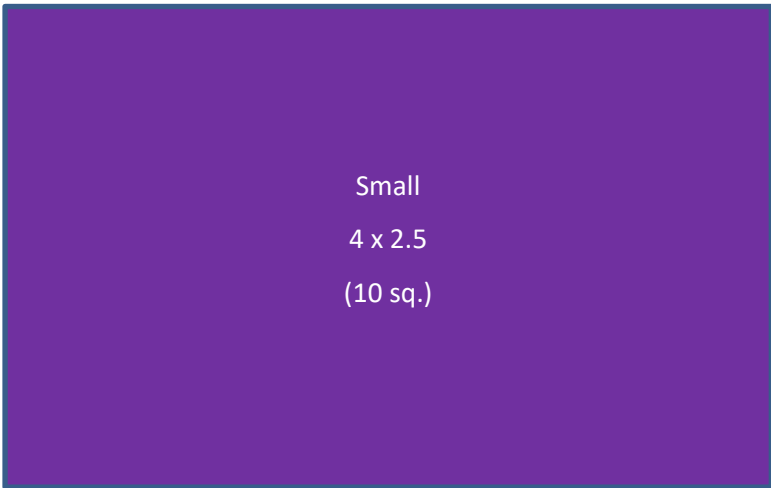
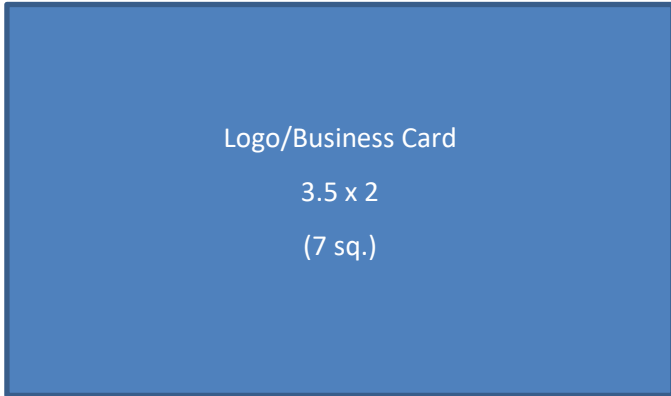
[2020 Membership Application](#) – The application form for membership is electronic. The annual cost of membership is \$25 and payment can be made on-line with a credit card or you can send a check. If you prefer to send a check, please contact [Alex Power](#), Treasurer to create an invoice for you. If you become a member, you receive discounted rates at the annual meeting and at ITS Texas training events. Note that if you attended the 2019 annual meeting then you are already a member for 2020.


Student Chapters of ITS Texas - Visit this section to learn more about the student chapters of ITS Texas, links to their websites, their annual reports, and requirements for starting a student chapter at your school!

NEW 2021 SPONSOR AD FEE OPTIONS

The ITS Texas newsletter and website are great forums for advertising your company and products. In the past, ITS Texas has had a flat fee of \$200 for advertisements in our newsletter or website. However, we would like to offer our sponsors more choices recognizing that sponsors have different marketing strategies and needs. The new fee structure starting in 2021 is shown in the table below. This structure is aimed at providing options as well as savings when different advertisement options are packaged together. For example, “Website” means the sponsor’s logo will be advertised on the website for 12 months or “Newsletter” means a sponsor’s ad will be published in the newsletter at least three times per year and distributed to 900+ ITS Texas members and friends. An “Email Blast” is the newsletter email notification that is sent out to the same 900+ members and friends. And “All” means the logo ad size (3.5”x2”) is applicable to all venue options.

Venue	Material	W x H	Annual \$	+ Web \$	+ Email Blast \$	+ Web + Email Blast \$
Website	Logo	3.5"x2"	100	NA	175	NA
Email Blast	Logo		100	175	NA	NA
All	Logo		50	125	125	200
Newsletter	Ad-Small	4"x2.5"	100	175	175	250
	Ad-Medium	4"x5"	200	275	275	350
	Ad-Large	7"x4.5"	400	475	475	550





Large
7 x 4.5
(31.5 sq.)

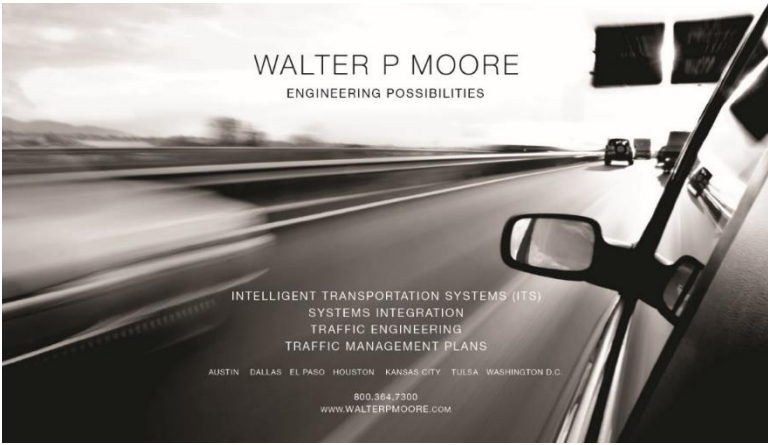
WRITE AN ARTICLE FOR THE NEWSLETTER!

The ITS Texas newsletter is a great way for you as an ITS professional to **share your projects, plans, initiatives or other ITS related items with the ITS community**. If you would like to share something with the ITS Texas members through the newsletter, please contact any of your ITS Texas Board [members](#).

YOUR 2020 ITS TEXAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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