



*University Transportation Center for Mobility  
Texas Transportation Institute*



***“Improving  
the Quality of Life  
by Enhancing Mobility”***

<http://utcm.tamu.edu>



## *Who We Are*

- one of up to 60 University Transportation Centers in the US
- designated by the passage of SAFETEA-LU in August, 2005
- part of The University Transportation Centers Program (UTCP), administered by USDOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA) (for more information on UTCP, see back cover).
- operating under a grant from UTCP of \$1.5M per year for 4 years.

## *UTCM Theme*

The theme of the UTCM is "Improving the Quality of Life by Enhancing Mobility." Preliminary Proposals should present ways to accomplish this objective through projects or programs in research, education and technology transfer.

## *Overarching Objectives*

- To have a lasting impact on transportation. Accordingly, UTCM seeks project deliverables that will continue to provide benefits beyond the life of the grant.
- To provide lasting partnerships between TTI and the academic community.
- To foster collaboration between academic departments and programs on the Texas A&M campus with an interest in transportation issues.
- To leverage funds. While matching is not required by the terms of the UTCM grant, proposals that leverage additional funding sources, especially those with long-term potential, are strongly encouraged.



## Research Focus Areas

The four Research Focus Areas identified to accomplish UTCM's theme are:

- Coast-to-coast, border-to-border mobility
- Rural public transportation
- Congestion management and mitigation
- Innovative financing

**Coast-to-coast, border-to-border mobility** includes all transportation modes and the linkages between them from a regional and national viewpoint. A breakdown in the transportation system in one area of the country may affect the entire system and the country as a whole. The ability to analyze and mitigate this type of situation, and identify "chokepoints" and how they affect the nationwide transportation system, would be greatly beneficial. UTCM seeks to develop a national model to predict the impact of such a failure and to aid in analyzing proposed mitigation measures, and welcomes other research that would positively impact this area.

**Rural public transportation** research represents an opportunity for UTCM to make a difference in the quality of life for rural people. Research topics could include better routing methods, the use of technology in rural transit systems, safety issues, and more. In Texas and contiguous states, many areas of opportunity exist for such studies, including the Colonias (a series of economically disadvantaged small communities along the Texas/Mexico Rio Grande border), the Mississippi Delta, and the Four Corners area of the American Southwest.

**Congestion management and mitigation** research currently underway at TTI will be expanded by the UTCM, providing a greater understanding of the benefits of mobility improvement programs and projects. Through such efforts, UTCM will set the stage for major, long-term research initiatives in this area.

**Innovative financing** methods can provide alternative sources of funding for transportation improvements and new construction. Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) have the potential to generate revenue to fill the widening gap between ever-increasing vehicle miles traveled and the decreasing resources available for both new construction and existing infrastructure improvements. UTCM therefore solicits projects that seek to better understand the policy implications and implementation issues involved with P3s and other financing options.

*All research projects sponsored by UTCM shall have significant student involvement and a technology transfer component, which may include plans for publication.*

## Technology Transfer (T2)

Examples of T2 activities that are encouraged by UTCM include local, state and/or national conferences; professional development activities, including short courses, webinars, and online education; outreach programs for K-12 and higher education; diversity initiatives; and activities that enhance communications and opportunities for collaboration between transportation-related programs at TAMU.

## Education

UTCM's education activities are intended to increase the quantity and, more importantly, the quality of graduates prepared to enter the professional transportation workforce. Some of the activities UTCM will support include:

**Course Development.** Awards will be made to develop new transportation courses. These would be proposed by faculty and professional staff and are intended to enrich courses available for students, as well as for professional development. It is anticipated that these may be replicated in transportation programs at other universities.

**Program Development.** UTCM will support awards for the development of new transportation programs. These could be within a department or interdisciplinary in nature. The grant would support the activities necessary for the development and approval of a new degree or program, including curriculum development and support for those shepherding the proposal through the process. The development of other types of education activities, such as short courses, outreach programs, or curriculum analysis and enhancement may also be supported.



UTCM is a member of the

## University Transportation Centers Program

*"Advancing U.S. technology and expertise in the many disciplines comprising transportation through the mechanisms of education, research and technology transfer at university-based centers of excellence."*

<http://utc.dot.gov>



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