



TRANSTALK

A Publication of the Institute of Transportation Engineers ITE Metropolitan Section of New York & New Jersey

Volume 2, Issue 3

September 2000

Editor's Notes

Alternatives to Congestion Pricing

The last issue of *TransTalk* contained an article that compared the ratios of auto tolls to transit fares - now in effect versus in the mid twentieth century. It noted that transportation facility operators are not allowed to use congestion pricing to help manage their facilities. What are the alternatives?

Add Capacity: One obvious solution when demand exceeds supply is to add supply. However, for a host of reasons from environmental concerns to NIMBYisms, this approach is frequently not viable.

Congestion Reigns: This is the current paradigm. Tolls are viewed as a political phenomenon and not as a mechanism that can influence demand. This is perhaps as good an example as any of socialism in what we Americans like to think of as a market economy.

Congestion Pricing: In the ideal case, tolls would be one of the tools used to prevent congestion. Other tools would in-
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Ethics and Using Specialists

The previous issue of *TransTalk* included excerpts from the presentation by NYSDOT Regional Director Robert Dennison at the May Met Section Meeting that addressed the issue of credibility of transportation engineers and a commentary on professional ethics by a Met Section member who used the pseudonym of Trolley Dodger. This issue contains excerpts from a letter by another Met Section member to Mr. Dennison.

Another ethical issue engineers, including transportation engineers, routinely face is when to call in specialists. How would most people feel if they discovered that their medical doctor had avoided referring them to a specialist in order to avoid losing the fees that would otherwise go to the specialist despite the fact that the specialist would best meet their needs or, even more egregious, if their primary care doctor could not do an adequate job? It is not just the feeling of outrage, but a feeling that their doctor had behaved unethically.

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Using Our Facilities

Last issue, there was an article on *User Friendly Highways*. To what extent does our customer know how to use our facilities? To what extent do we, as experts, know how to use our transportation systems?

Here are some issues to ponder?

◆ There have been studies which show large percentages of transit customers cannot read a timetable or schedule. Yet, such printed information is crucial to the use of many transit services.

◆ Likewise, many motorists cannot read a map. Yet, this is a major source of off-line information for motorists.

◆ What training is appropriate for a driver's license? Did you ever hear of an auto school that teaches people to drive? Aside from specialized schools for professional drivers who are typi-

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Election of Officers For 2001

LOUIS L. LUGLIO, MET SECTION SECRETARY

The Section Nominating Committee has proposed the candidates shown for 2001 Section Officers. All candidates have indicated their willingness to serve, if elected. Please vote and return your Ballot by November 10, 2000. All Met Section members in good standing should receive their ballots and Biographical sketches of the candidates for Treasurer from the Met Section Secretary.

Candidates for 2001 Section Officers

PRESIDENT.....ROBERT BRAKMAN
VICE PRESIDENT.....LOUIS LUGLIO
SECRETARY.....ANDY PALURI
TREASURER.....MICHAEL SALATTI
TREASURER.....JOSEPH ORTH
Jr. SECTION DIRECTOR.....ANDREW SARACENA

Executive Board**Lynn Lamunyon**President
(732)577-9000**Robert Brakman**

Vice President

Louis Luglio

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Andy Paluri

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Andy Saracena

Past President

Joseph G. Pecora

Sr. Section Director

Mark Kulewicz

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**International
Director****Joseph G. Pecora****STANDING COMMITTEE
CHAIRPERSONS****Andy Saracena***Awards***Gus DaSilva****Naomi Leisman***Career Guidance***Richard Marsanico***Industry***Lee Goodman***Legislative***Joseph Orth***Local Arrangements-N.J.***James Paral***Local Arrangements-S.N.J.***Mike Salatti***Local Arrangements-N.Y.C.***Wayne Muller***Local Arrangements-L.I.***John Hsu***Local Arrangements-
Westchester***Joseph Epifania***Membership***Mayer Horn***Newsletter*

mhorn@vastnet.net

Joseph Pecora*Nominations***Ray Martinez***Professional Development***Mayer Horn***Public Information***Ira Quiat***School Coordination***Ira Huttner***Technical***Mark Kulewicz***Web Page***President's Column - Issue 3 - 2000***By Lynn LaMunyon*

Welcome back from our Summer break! I hope it was enjoyable for all of you. During the hiatus, some of us attended the Annual Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee. It was a very successful meeting. During the meeting, it was announced that Jenny Grote will be our new International Vice President and Steve Gayle will move up to President. Also at this meeting, three awards were given to members of the Met Section: Patrick J. O'Mara, of Eng-Wong, Taub & Associates was presented with both the Young Consultant's Award and the Past President's Award, and The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey was presented with the ITS Council Partnership Award for the George Washington Bridge ITS Deployment Project. Congrats to all!



Our last Business Meeting was held on October 19th at Arthur's Steakhouse in Hoboken, NJ. This meeting was very well attended. The large crowd, coupled with the layout of the facility, contributes to poor acoustics during the meeting. This year, we rented a new PA system, which helped with this problem. At this meeting, we also presented Life Member certificates to Michael Chasin, PE and Lall Kwatra, PE. Life Member status is achieved when a member in good standing reaches the age of 65 and has paid dues above the Student Member level for 25 years. Life Members automatically have their dues waived. This year, the following individuals were also elevated to Life Member status: John Cilo, Jr., PE, Donald Sacks, PE, and George Blomme, PE. We are hoping that we will be able to coordinate the schedules of the meetings and the schedules of the individuals so that we may present their certificates in the near future. Congratulations go out to all of the recipients.

Our last meeting for the year will be held on November 21st at Riccardo's in Astoria, Queens, NY. This is our Annual meeting, so we encourage all members to attend. At this meeting, we will announce our newly elected Executive Board Members, as well as our section award recipients.

As I have mentioned in previous issues, the Met Section is hosting the 2002 District 1 Meeting. Mike Salatti and Andy Saracena are officially the Co-Chairs of the Local Arrangements Committee. Mike O'Rourke is the Technical Committee chair, Wiley Engineering (with help from Joe Orth) will handle Registration, Don Gordon will run the Golfing Event, and Noel Toner and I will handle the Social/Spouse/Hospitality portion of the meeting. We are currently looking for motivated individuals who can assist Mike O'Rourke with the Technical Program. This is a time consuming task; however, judging from past events, the hard work is well worth it, since the Technical Program can often make or break a meeting. If you are interested in contributing to this effort, please call Mike O'Rourke directly at (914) 997-8510. Any help will be greatly appreciated!

I hope to see you all in October and November. If you have any questions, or would like to get more involved in the Met Section, please feel free to call me at (732) 577-9000 or email me at llamunyo@schoordepalma.com.

Report on the ITE International Board Meeting, Nashville, Tennessee August 5, 2000

By JOSEPH G. PECORA

INTERNATIONAL DIRECTOR, DISTRICT 1

Improving the Institute

- 1) The Institute remains in excellent financial health. It appears that publishing all the major texts will begin to result in larger net revenue from sale of texts next year, once the cost of amortizing the production costs are completed.
- 2) The Board approved a five year loan in the amount of \$500,000 to cover our relocation costs. Cash required for the move is approximately \$675,000. The money borrowed would be invested which would offset the cost of the loan interest. The bottom line is that it allows us the flexibility to borrow as needed for minimal costs.
- 3) The Board approved a trial coupon program that offers the first year's student member dues free. The coupons will be provided to Section Presidents for distribution. The number of student members has dropped over the last several years, and this program is designed to reverse that trend.
- 4) Relocation of the Institute is progressing. We now hope to be in our new location at 1099 14th Street by Thanksgiving. The problem is to get the Federal agencies to vacate. It is helping the Institute financially in that we are not paying two rents. Presently planning for an open house during TRB Week.
- 5) Millennium Fund continues to grow. Over \$175,000 received as we proceed to our goal of \$250,000. All Section officers should encourage participation in this fund drive to help offset our relocation costs.
- 6) The Board approved a motion to offer the Transportation Professionals Certification Board an opportunity to consolidate its two outstanding loans into a single loan for up to \$225,000 with an effective date of January 1, 2000 at an interest rate of 0.00%, with the balance due and payable on or before December 31, 2005.
- 7) Professional Traffic Operations Certification Program update: approximately 475 PTOE are registered. PTOE exam was held August 5, 2000 in Nashville. Exams are scheduled for November 4, 2000 in Chicago, Phoenix, New York, Toronto, Vancouver and Boston.
- 8) Traffic Operations Practitioner and Transportation Planner - The Certification Board still working on these programs.

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More on Credibility

The previous issue of TransTalk included excerpts from the presentation by NYSDOT Regional Director Robert Dennison at the May Met Section meeting. The following are excerpts from an August 25th letter that was sent by Met Section member Arthur Freed to Mr. Dennison. This letter was made available by Mr. Freed and is printed with his permission.

Your article in the August 2000 ITE TransTalk clearly identified a major credibility problem faced by the engineering profession. Your recommendations toward a restoration of public confidence are correct, yet identify only the tip of the iceberg.

To reestablish confidence and rapport, the effort must include the many levels of contact the user has with a Department, and on the most basic levels. I've often made the comparison between the public contact with a Commissioner, or perhaps 40 - 50 telephone calls or personal meetings, with that of a flag person who may encounter 30,000 persons or more in a days work. Who does the average motorist form a Departmental opinion around?

Some specific examples of areas that lose public confidence include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Periodic rock blasting on I-287 in Westchester and Rockland that closes both directions of traffic for 20 to 30 minutes. Technology exists through variable message signs, overriding proximity radio transmission, etc. to advise a motorist, at a point of ready diversion, before being permitted to drive into a stopped condition and learn, too late, that another route should have been taken. A private sector communication center in Westchester, that would do precisely that at no tax payers expense died for lack of official interest. Perhaps those who had, and now have, the decision making responsibility should attempt to place themselves in the plight of a woman in labor seeking to reach the hospital, the job applicant on the way to an important interview, the surgeon responding to an emergency, or the business traveler trying to reach an airport.
- ◆ A Westchester Village erects illegal, non standard regulatory signs on a State Highway, and ignores the Region's directives to remove them. A confused motorist, left to the whims of some graphics designer, is a crash waiting to happen.

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Congestion... (Continued from page 1)

corporate ITS elements, *e.g.*, better incident detection and removal, techniques to increase capacity by reducing the frequency of crashes.

Price Gouging: The term "price gouging" has been applied when sellers raise prices to allocate finite resources. This reflects the strong emotions tied to pricing, including a perception that the sole purpose of a price (including a toll) is to pay for the product or service. Hence, the often-heard assertion that the toll should be eliminated since the facility has been paid for.

Other Choices: Clearly, pricing is not the only way to allocate scarce resources. Another technique is rationing. For example, suppose only vehicles with odd number license plates were allowed on the highway (or the bridge or the tunnel) on odd days and only even on the other? If that's not enough of a "cure" or "fix", imagine that only vehicles whose last digit matched the last digit of the date were allowed. The real issue is whether any of these "other choices" is more efficient than congestion pricing; economists argue that they are significantly inferior.

Carrot and Stick: Not mentioned here is the "carrot and stick"-- reducing off-peak tolls to no more than is needed to maintain congestion-free operation, programs to encourage transit and ridesharing, etc. Can you imagine two things:

- ◆ Every facility - not just tunnels and bridges - having a manager and a duty supervisor, not only with a host of live data inputs, but also with current predictions of traffic consequences for various alternative control policies.
- ◆ The expectation that the duty supervisor would adjust the tolls to just high enough to maximize throughput and prevent congestion.

Private vs. Public: Noted above was how the reign of congestion is an excellent example of socialism in what we Americans think of as our market-based economy and how prices responding to supply and demand are often described as price gouging. It is worth noting that, until rather recently, all toll facilities in the nation have been operated by public agencies whereas private corporations build, operate, and maintain toll facilities in other parts of the world. All toll facilities in the NY-NJ region are still operated by public agencies. Can you imagine a corporation leasing the Lincoln Tunnel or the Long Island Expressway and using congestion pricing (along with improved service) to assure the absence of congestion?

Facilities... (Continued from page 1)

cally also bodyguards, auto schools teach one thing: how to pass a road test. (This writer's father-in-law, who barely passed his road test on his 18th birthday and never drove again for forty years although he maintained his license, went to an auto school to *learn to drive*. The school had never encountered this problem before and was of little help.)

◆ The approximately 40,000 deaths annually on US highways is one measure of the inadequate performance of our highway system. Another is increased reports of road rage. Yet, to what extent do motorists avoid causing road rage, particularly keeping right except to pass on multi-lane roads. Indeed, to what extent do so-called professionals (from ITE members to taxi drivers) practice this basic principle of road use?

◆ There are additional activities (or lack thereof) that contribute to poor highway system performance. Can one imagine motorists or passengers traveling without seat belts? Can one imagine motorists unable to remember to use directional signals? Can one imagine motorists not having their headlights on at all times (not just at night and when the wipers are used)? Can one imagine vehicles manufactured that do not automatically turn headlights and all other lights on when the engine is started? Can one imagine vehicles without \$2 spot mirrors on both side view mirrors, much less vehicles without right side mirrors?

Meeting the New Commissioner

The speaker at the next meeting of the ITE Met Section will be the new commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation, Iris Weinshall. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 21st in Riccardo's Restaurant in Astoria. Mark your calendar and look for the meeting announcement.

Visit the Met Section's Web Site

The ITE Met Section has a web site: www.ite-metsection.org. It has the latest information on what's happening in your Met Section. Bookmark it. Check it often. Future meetings of the Met Section are usually listed here first.



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MUTCD Broadcast March 2001

FHWA reports the much-anticipated new MUTCD will be completed by the end of this year. Numerous changes and updates will be incorporated into the new manual to help keep our nation's roadways, motorists and workers safe.

ATSSA will host a nationwide broadcast from Northern Virginia Community College on March 20, 2001, from 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. EST to outline the new manual and to address immediate comments. Viewers will be able to speak with the FHWA panel "live" during the broadcast via 1-800 numbers. To register as a sponsor and host of a local downlink site in your community, contact Chris Kovacs-Sbitan at (800) 272-8772, ext. 150, or by e-mail at ChrisS@atssa.com

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SEND MATERIAL FOR THIS NEWSLETTER TO THE EDITOR AT:

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 300 Broadway
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ITE Board Meeting (Continued from page 3)

9) The Board approved a motion to dissolve the Transportation Demand Management Council effective December 31, 2000, and consolidate its activities with the Transportation Planners Council.

Agency Membership

Total number of agency membership is now 95. The goal this year was to increase the total by 20. At the present time, we have 18 on board. Total number of members included in agency membership is 1,156.

Web Development

ITE on the Web continues to grow. The average number of user sessions per day is over 1,000. The most frequently downloaded document is Traffic Calming State of Practice.

Publications

Publications are still a major source of revenue for the Institute, with the ITE Trip Generation Book still the #1 sales publication. Regarding the status of the next major publications - ITS textbook scheduled to be released in October, 2000; Transportation and Land Development scheduled for March, 2001 and the Traffic Control Devices Handbook scheduled for December, 2001.

Federal Contracts

U.S. DOT continues to turn to the Institute to assist in areas of mutual interest. On March 20, 2000 the Institute signed their third major contract with FHWA. The project deals with Next Generation - Surface Transportation Management & Operations. Under this contract, the three major task areas will be education and training support, technical and programmatic support and industry outreach and feedback. We will assist FHWA to provide guidance, support as well as facilitate and advance the management and operation of the Surface Transportation Systems in the United States.

Headquarters Staff

Mark Norman, Deputy Director for the Institute will be leaving at the end of August to take a job with TRB.

Annual Meeting

The meeting was held in Nashville, and it should be noted that it was very well attended. Final numbers are not in, but it appears we will equal or maybe surpass last year's attendance for both attendees and vendors.

Board Procedures

In order to better provide guidance for those candidates seeking International leadership, several changes were adopted.

One major change involves the use of bulk mailing, and direct advertising techniques which were deemed inappropriate.

The Board approved the use of certain expenditures of Council dues for various uses as approved by the Council Executive Committees.

Future Meetings

The next International Board Meeting will be in October, 2000 in Washington, D.C.

The ITE 2001 Mid-Year Conference will be held in Monterey, California March 25-28, 2001.

The title of the Conference is "Improving Transportation Performance and Productivity". Next year's Annual Meeting will be held in Chicago, August 19-22, 2001.

Partnership Agreements

A new partnership agreement was signed between ITE and PIARC (World Road Association). The agreement is for three years and then renewable every year. PIARC is an International Association that provides a worldwide contract network to exchange knowledge and techniques on road and transportation issues. They represent 96 member countries relayed by 25 National Committees.

Honorary Membership

The Board chose to elevate two individuals to Honorary Membership status. Laurence Dondanville was the 35th President of the Institute in 1974 and has over 50 years experience in transportation. Allen Swanson was our International President in 1988 and has over 38 years experience in transportation.

Blue Ribbon Committee

The ITE Board of Directors recognized that technical products developed by ITE are not always applicable outside of the United States. The Blue Ribbon Committee, of which I was a member and Chaired by Steve Gayle, prepared a final proposal to create a revolving loan fund for Districts 7 and 8. The International Projects Fund will be created in 2001 with a sum of \$50,000 to be drawn from the general accounts of ITE. It is anticipated the funds will be used by the two Districts to create technical products that address some needs more germane to those outside the U.S. The net revenue from the sale of these products would be used to replenish the fund first, with any additional revenue being returned to the sponsoring District to augment the revolving fund or go into ITE general publications revenue.

Ethics... (Continued from page 1)

Well, this phenomenon is routinely encountered in your editor's current professional practice: Sometimes, traffic simulation models - a specialty of KLD Associates - that are available for purchase can perform satisfactorily for a given project. In such a case, some consultants will purchase a model for use on a project even though the cost to the client would be less and the quality of the work would probably be better if the consultant brought KLD on board as a sub-consultant; this is done so that the consultant would avoid reducing its billable hours by bringing a specialist on board. In other cases, the consultant will use an inappropriate model (e.g., often one developed by KLD for the FHWA) - clearly an inappropriate tool - and jury rig the model to try to address the problem while producing an inferior product - an obvious disservice to the client.

Your editor recalls the mechanic (installer) whose job it was to assemble a bedroom set of furniture. All that was really required was to attach the frame to the headboard. When he realized the task and the fact that he had left the appropriate tools in his car trunk at least five minutes away, he dispatched his assistant to fetch the correct tools. However, the "mechanic" could not wait; he began hammering a wood screw into the headboard. The wrong tool! At this point, your editor thanked him for coming and advised him that your editor would complete (perform) the job. He was dismissed.

How should clients treat engineering consultants who do not have the clients' interests at heart, who use the wrong tool?

Career Opportunities

Companies which advertise in TransTalk are encouraged to use this newsletter to place descriptions of available positions. The service is complimentary.

Credibility... (Continued from page 3)

◆ Traveling southbound on the three lane Cross Island Parkway, approaching Northern Boulevard, warning signs first advise that the two left lanes are closed. These are closely followed by signage that advised the right lane is closed. Fortunately they are all wrong and the road is open, but motorist confidence is eroded and as you so aptly stated "...the people don't believe us..." Is that so surprising?

◆ Portions of the newly reconstructed westbound viaduct of I-287 over the Bronx River are torn out, right after that project is completed, to commence work on a Route 100 interchange. Could that not have been foreseen and included in the viaduct design?

◆ Guide signs on certain I-287 entrances have expired and illegible reflective sheeting that makes nighttime driving a matter of guesswork for those who depend upon adequate directions.

◆ A department proposal for an I-287 HOV lane, that in my opinion had so many engineering, operational, and political constraints as to make it unfeasible is finally dropped. Unfortunately the recommendations of the initial I-287 Task Force that would have lessened many of the deficiencies of the corridor are also dropped by the Department in favor of yet again, another Task Force study. Does the Department believe itself?

The faults, outlined by you, lie not only within the profession; but worsen as more and more young engineers come on board, graduating from colleges who have not provided a well rounded education. Too frequently, gone are courses in Public Speaking, English, the Humanities, and those that contribute toward making a believable character.

To restore the public confidence, and seek their support and belief in your recommendations, a start must be made with those areas they encounter every day.

Very truly yours,
ARTHUR FREED, P.E.

District Chairman's Report

MICHAEL O'ROURKE

This has been quite a year so far. We had a great District Meeting in Niagara Falls in conjunction with District 7, followed by a very successful International Meeting at Nashville. Congratulations to Steve Gayle and Jenny Grote on their election as President and Vice-President, respectively.

ITE is moving Headquarters from School Street. There will be an open house in January during the week of the Transportation Research Board Meeting.

The Section Annual Meetings will be held during the next three months. It's also time to vote for Section and Chapter officers for next year. Remember to vote, so that you have a voice in the direction that ITE will take.

Remember to vote on November 7th.

ITE Reception in New Office

The build-out of the new ITE Headquarters Office at 1099 14th Street, NW., Suite 300 West in Washington is well under way. The move is scheduled to occur in early December. On Tuesday, January 9, 2001, ITE will host the traditional ITE reception at the new ITE offices. If you are in Washington for the TRB Annual Meeting, this will give you an opportunity to visit the new office which is just over two miles from the Marriot Wardman Park and Omni Shoreham hotels. It is a two stop ride on the Metro and a walk of only a few blocks.

Employment Opportunities

The **New Jersey Transit Authority** is accepting resumes for a traffic engineering position at the Authority's Administration Building in New Brunswick, NJ.

Duties will consist of management and traffic engineering support of the Operations Department's responsibilities for traffic engineering design, operations and safety.

Qualified applicants shall possess a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering and a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering, specializing in Traffic Engineering. Professional Engineering license in NJ preferred. Excellent salary and benefits package. Resumes, detailing graduate level courses, can be faxed to 732-828-4508 or mailed to:

Human Resources Department
NJTA
PO Box 1121
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Employment Opportunities

(Continued)

KLD Associates, Inc. is seeking a recent graduate of a recognized Master's Degree program in Transportation Engineering for an entry level position. Responsibilities will include application of traffic simulation models, planning models, and signal optimization models. Applicants should identify experience with these models in their academic, and/or professional careers. Knowledge of computer programming in JAVA and/or C/C++ is a plus. A competitive salary will be offered based upon experience. Considerable opportunities for professional growth and advancement are available. Excellent verbal and written communication skills are required for this position. To demonstrate these skills, applicants are required to provide a cover letter and detailed resume in order to be considered for an interview. Please mail these materials including salary expectations and history to:

Personnel Director
KLD Associates, Inc.
300 Broadway
Huntington Station, NY 11746-1405

Applications for this position submitted via e-mail, fax, or telephone, will not be considered.

Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc. is seeking a traffic engineer with 6 to 8 years of experience to assume responsibilities leading to long-term growth. Our clients include major shopping center and office developers, sponsors of residential and institutional projects, and various governmental jurisdictions, primarily in the New York/Connecticut area. The position **requires:** A BS or higher degree in engineering; registration as a Professional Engineer; experience in Traffic/Transportation; and proficiency with current traffic software. The ability to prepare high-quality technical reports is also essential, as are public presentation skills.

Benefits include medical/dental/visual insurance, profit sharing, a 401K plan, and a generous holiday/vacation schedule. Applicants should forward resumes and salary requirements to: **Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc., 350 Theodore Fremd Avenue, Rye, New York 10580. EOE, smoke-free office Fax: (914) 967-6615.**



TRANSTALK

A PUBLICATION OF THE INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS

KLD Associates, Inc.

MAYER HORN, PE.

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Address Changes... Should You Tell Us?

Several recipients of *TransTalk* have advised the editor of their new addresses. Here's what to do:

No one at the Met Section maintains a database for *TransTalk*. Since ITE headquarters produces the labels that are used to mail *TransTalk*, send corrections to :

Shawn K. Harbaugh
Institute of Transportation Engineers
525 School Street, S.W., Suite 410
Washington DC 20024-2797
Phone: 202-554-8050, ext. 124
Fax: 202-863-5486
E-Mail: sharbaugh@ite.org

If you want to tell the editor of your new address or if you also receive the KLD Associates Newsletter, then feel free to contact the editor. Of course, if you have any material you want included in *TransTalk*, send that directly to the editor at KLD Associates. Thanks

Meeting the New Commissioner

The speaker at the next meeting of the ITE Met Section will be the new commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation, Iris Weinshall. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 21st in Riccardo's Restaurant in Astoria. Mark your calendar and look for the meeting announcement.

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