

[ITS Berkeley Director's Letter](#)

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ITS Berkeley Director's Letter

Institute of Transportation Studies



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

With this last Director's email before the start of my sabbatical on July 1, I am really excited to see the bright future of ITS, as Joan Walker takes over as Acting Director of the Institute for this academic year.

In the last three years, thanks to the tireless work of many of you at ITS, we have succeeded in setting ITS on a trajectory of growth that has tremendous potential to accelerate even more in the years to come.

From a research standpoint, our ecosystem has flourished with the birth of the transportation initiative and partnership with LBNL, the success of new Federal programs (in particular congestion mitigation program of the US DOT, SHASTA program of the DOE), the birth of the Berkeley DeepDrive (BDD) industry partnership program, the establishment of cross-UC research projects through the SB1 funding. As a community, we have significantly grown through our various events, in particular the ITS seminar, which over the last three years has often filled with more than 100 attendees on a weekly basis, our awards ceremony, social events, and very visible, standing-room-only TRB reception.

On the operational side, the recent passage of SB1 provides the Institute with a new, stable financial model that complements the structural model we currently have, and gives us much more flexibility and control over our research funds. In parallel, thanks to the tireless efforts of many, we have now recovered from the loss of overhead return many years ago that forced a reduction of over \$800K per year in operating funds. We are now rebuilding on that front, too. At a time of shrinking budgets everywhere on campus, we can be proud to have not only sound finances, but to now be in growth mode in the way we operate.

I am also very excited about the new leadership we have had over the last three years for or in many of the research centers of ITS: this has clearly been the key of numerous successes, and moves us forward to passing the baton to the next generation in the near future. Planning the future, I am thrilled to announce a strategic planning committee (SPC), created of seven faculty and 5 staff members, supported by Highlands Consulting Group, to help us write our next 10 years strategic plan. The kick off of this SPC was earlier this month, and in the presence of our Engineering Dean Professor Shankar Sastry, and I have high hopes that over the next few months, it will produce a great plan for ITS to embark on the future transportation. The task of this committee is significant and challenging as we are entering a new era of collaboration with our sister branches in other UC campuses (Davis, Irvine, and UCLA), and potentially extending our footprint to a wider network including the CSU network and Stanford. ITS will be at the center of a California-wide approach and once again put ITS and the state at the forefront of innovation. Joan Walker will tell you more about it this coming year, as she engages many of you in this process.

I am also thrilled to announce that our colleague Professor Daniel Rodriguez has accepted the newly created position of Associate Director of ITS. This position, which never existed before, was created this year, to increase the level of collaboration between the College of Engineering and the College of Environmental Design, as many of the problems of transportation of our future will require a very strong interplay of policy, planning, engineering and technology, all of which we have at ITS, particularly in these two units.

I also want to thank the many people who have worked tirelessly in the trenches with us making sure that all the individual elements that cement a community continue to grow, for example our 10 years ITS book, our new (as of 2014) Facebook and Twitter feeds, which currently have a very high level of activity, our creation of policy briefs by the library, our new website (in final stages of development, to be launched very soon), our monthly newsletters, and the many projects currently underway including the creation of a more active networks of ITS alumni.

Finally, I would like to thank Joan for accepting the pilot seat of ITS while I am on sabbatical. I am extremely grateful for her willingness to take on this role, and very excited to see her continue the growth of ITS on our current trajectory.

Go Bears and happy summer!

Alexandre Bayen
ITS Director

HEADLINES

 Transportation Sustainability Research Center Co-Director Susan Shaheen comments on ["amid popularity of ride-sharing apps, 'casual carpool' not slowing down"](#) for CBS National News.

 TSRC Co-Director Susan Shaheen comments on ["a driverless future dawns, should we still build parking?"](#) at Doggerel.

 TSRC Co-Director Susan Shaheen's blog ["One-Way Carsharing's Evolution in the Americas"](#) named Move Forward's most popular blog.

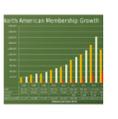
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