Mission Statement

The Intelligent Transportation Systems Institute is a national University Transportation Center (UTC) funded through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), the federal surface transportation bill passed in 2005. This funding continues the Institute’s efforts initiated under SAFETEA-LU’s predecessors, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA).

The ITS Institute plans and conducts activities that further the mission of the United States Department of Transportation’s UTC program. That mission is to advance U.S. technology and expertise in the many disciplines that make up transportation through education, research, and technology transfer activities at university-based centers of excellence. To help us accomplish this, we direct the work of researchers from multiple disciplines to advance the state of the art in the core ITS technologies of computing, sensing, communications, and control systems to solve today’s challenging transportation problems.

Our focus is on human-centered technology that enhances the safety and mobility of road- and transit-based transportation. To that end, we bring together technologists and those who study human behavior from the University with our partners—the USDOT, the Minnesota DOT, other government agencies, and private industry—to ensure that Institute-developed technologies become tools that help us understand and optimize human capabilities as they relate to transportation.

Additionally, the Institute addresses issues related to transportation in a northern climate, investigates technologies for improving the safety of travel in rural environments, and considers social and economic policy issues related to the use of core ITS technologies.
**Management Structure**

The ITS Institute is located on the Twin Cities campus of the University of Minnesota and is housed within the Center for Transportation Studies (CTS). Much of the Institute’s successful leadership in the development and application of intelligent transportation systems and technologies results from its state and national partnerships, including those with CTS, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, private industry, and county and city engineers.

The Institute director leads its operation, implements its strategic plan, and assumes overall responsibility for its success. In this role, he directs Institute programs, personnel, and funds.

The Institute’s board guides and oversees the implementation of the Institute’s work. The board works with the director to ensure that the USDOT’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration requirements are met, approves annual plans and budgets, and meets at least twice yearly to provide direction to, and approval of, the Institute’s activities.

Institute staff and University researchers, drawing from various areas of expertise, help create and spread knowledge related to intelligent transportation systems through research, education, and technology transfer activities. In addition, the leadership and staff of CTS provide connections and access to an extensive transportation research and education network. The Institute’s affiliation with the Center allows it to work seamlessly with CTS staff and benefit from its diverse outreach, administration, and communications capabilities.

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  Director, District Operations Division, Minnesota Department of Transportation

- Ron Hynes
  Deputy Associate Administrator, Federal Transit Administration
ITS INSTITUTE STAFF

Director

Max Donath
ITS Institute Director
612-625-2204
donath@me.umn.edu

Research Programs

Craig Shankwitz
Director, Intelligent Vehicles Laboratory
612-625-0323
shank004@umn.edu

Michael Manser
Director, HumanFIRST Program
612-625-0447
manse003@umn.edu

Eil Kwon
Director, Northland Advanced Transportation Systems Research Laboratories
218-726-8351
eilkwon@d.umn.edu

John Hourdos
Director, Minnesota Traffic Observatory
612-626-5492
hourdos@umn.edu

Lee Munnich
Director, State and Local Policy Program, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs
612-625-7357
lmunnich@umn.edu

Research and Contract Management

Penny Harris
Contract Coordinator
612-625-9246
ham163@cts.umn.edu

Jan Lucke
Program Coordinator
612-625-8401
jlucke@cts.umn.edu

Laurie McGinnis
CTS Associate Director
612-625-3019
mcgin001@cts.umn.edu

Linda Preisen
Research Administration Director
612-626-1808
lpreisen@cts.umn.edu

Dawn Spanhake
Finance and Agreements Director
612-626-1536
spanhake@cts.umn.edu

Outreach and Publications

Cadie Wright Adhikary
Graphic Designer
612-624-0546
Cwright@cts.umn.edu

Gina Baas
Communications and Outreach Director
612-626-7331
baasx001@cts.umn.edu

Amy Friebe
Senior Editor
612-626-7330
Frieb003@cts.umn.edu

Shawn Haag
Program Coordinator
612-625-5608
haag0025@cts.umn.edu

Stephanie Malinoff
Outreach and Education Coordinator
612-624-8398
malinoff@cts.umn.edu

Arlene Mathison
Information Manager/Librarian
612-624-3646
amathison@cts.umn.edu

Peter Park Nelson
Editor
612-624-1572
nelso513@cts.umn.edu

Pamela Snopl
Managing Editor
612-624-0841
snopl001@cts.umn.edu

Back row: Jan Lucke, Cadie Wright Adhikary, Peter Park Nelson, Gina Baas, Linda Preisen; front row: Dawn Spanhake, Arlene Mathison, Stephanie Malinoff, Pam Snopl, Amy Friebe. Not shown: Shawn Haag, Penny Harris, Laurie McGinnis
Faculty and Research Staff

College of Design
John Bloomfield
Kathleen Harder

Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs
John Bryson
Barbara Crosby
Frank Douma
Thomas Horan
Lee Munnich
Carissa Schively Slotterback
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Michael Manser
Arvind Menon
Bryan Newstrom
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Northland Advanced Transportation Systems Research Laboratories
The NATSRL program director is Eil Kwon.
Support and guidance for NATSRL is provided by its advisory board and research advisory panel, whose members include the staff from partnership agencies, including Mn/DOT, St. Louis County, and the City of Duluth.

Faculty and research staff conducting ITS-related research for NATSRL include the following:

University of Minnesota Duluth, College of Science and Engineering

Chemistry and Biochemistry
John Evans

Civil Engineering
Eil Kwon

Computer Science
Carolyn Crouch
Donald Crouch
Richard Maclin
Peter Willemsen

Electrical and Computer Engineering
Taek Kwon
Hua Tang

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