

Submission for Outstanding Section/Chapter Award: ITE SAN DIEGO SECTION

Regular Meetings (10 points)

Throughout the pandemic we did not miss a Board meeting. We had Board meeting every month as a virtual meeting, and we had a virtual event for members in every month except March. We received software support from International ITE and WesternITE to hold these virtual free events for our members, and we sincerely thank them for their support with the software.

Meeting #1	Date:	January 9	Location:	City of Escondido	
Topic (Speakers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escondido Creek Bikeway Project (Ali Shahzad, City of Temecula; Miriam Jim, City of Carlsbad) 				
Meeting #2	Date:	February 13	Location:	City of El Cajon	
Topic (Speakers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulations that Reduce Citywide VMT (Jason Geldert, City of Carlsbad) Mobility Choices and SB743 Implementation (Heidi Vonblum, City of San Diego) 				
Meeting #3	Date:	April 16	Location:	Online through ITE International's GotoMeeting	
Topic (Speakers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SB743 Workshop (Erik Ruehr, VRPA; Minjie Mei, City of Santee; K.C. Yellapu, LLG Engineers; Katy Cole, Fehr and Peers) 				
Meeting #4	Date:	May 14	Location:	Online	JOINT MEETING
Topic (Speakers)	Innovative Projects of Southern California: 2019-2020 (Part 1) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Escondido Creek Bikeway: Missing Link (Miriam Jim, City of Carlsbad) Exclusive Pedestrian Crossing Cycle by Time of Day (Noely Serrato, City of Santa Clara) Guidelines for TIS in the San Diego Region (Erik Ruehr, VRPA) <i>Joint Meeting with ITE SoCal and RSBITE Sections</i>				
Meeting #5	Date:	May 20	Location:	Online	JOINT MEETING
Topic (Speakers)	Innovative Projects of Southern California: 2019-2020 (Part 2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Experience with 9th Street Closure (Rajeev Seetharam, Port of Long Beach) Advanced Signal Priority System with No New Infrastructure (Avery Rhodes, Fourth Dimension Traffic Developers) CVAG Regional Traffic Signal Synchronization Program (Carlos Ortiz, ADVANTEC) <i>Joint Meeting with ITE SoCal and RSBITE Sections</i>				
Meeting #6	Date:	June 4	Location:	Online	
Topic (Speakers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19: An Economic Update for the San Diego Region (Ray Major, Chief Economist for San Diego Association of Governments [SANDAG]) 				
Meeting #7	Date:	July 16	Location:	Online	
Topic (Speakers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCM's Freeway Facilities Methodology – The Right-Sized Tool for Planning and Operations (Loren Bloomberg, Global Technology Leader for Traffic Operations at Jacobs) 				
Meeting #8	Date:	August 14	Location:	Online	SOCIAL, NETWORKING
Topic	Virtual Happy Hour				
Meeting #9	Date:	September 10	Location:	Online	
Topic (Speakers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carlsbad Connector (Nathan Schmidt, City of Carlsbad Transportation Planning and Mobility Manager) Strategic Highway Safety Plan (Saurabh Jayant, Caltrans; Mychal Loomis, Kimley-Horn and Associates) 				
Meeting #10	Date:	October 8	Location:	Online	JOINT MEETING
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Engineering Career Path from All Angles Panelists: Lima Saft, Caltrans; Jonathan Sanchez, Chen Ryan; Yari Ascencio, Kimley-Horn; Katy Cole, Fehr & Peers, and Kristin Gendron, Rick Engineering <i>Joint meeting with SDSU Student Section</i>				
Meeting #11	Date:	November 12	Location:	Online	
Topic	Annual Awards Meeting, Election Results, Swearing In				
Meeting #12	Date:	December 10	Location:	Online	SOCIAL, NETWORKING
Topic	Holiday Happy Hour				

Submission for Outstanding Section/Chapter Award: ITE SAN DIEGO SECTION (continued)

Even with the strong focus in 2020 on SB743 implementation and COVID-19 repercussions, ITE San Diego Section arranged for a variety of topics for our regular meetings in addition to the SB743 and COVID-19 issues. The SB743 and COVID-19 meetings were greatly appreciated by our members and are discussed in further detail in other sections of this annual report. Following are summaries of a few other meetings well received in 2020.

Meeting #1: The Escondido Creek Bikeway Missing Link Project is the first Class IV two-way cycle track constructed in San Diego County by re-purposing a portion of the existing roadways to a dedicated bike facility. The project filled an existing gap between the Escondido Creek Trail and the Inland Rail Trail by constructing new Class I and Class IV bike facilities through the city core. Bridging of this gap provides a continuous bike facility from the east end of the City to the west.

Meeting #9: The Carlsbad Connector was the first program of its kind in San Diego County. The pilot service was designed to increase COASTER ridership by providing a flexible and convenient solution to bridge the “last mile” gap between the Poinsettia station and the city’s primary industrial and commercial cores. The innovative project was operated by a partnership with the City of Carlsbad, NCTD, and SANDAG and was originally launched in response to recruiting and retention challenges raised by local businesses with employees who live further south who desired to avoid freeway traffic. Complementing the existing transit service with on-demand services like the Carlsbad Connector provided travelers with flexible and convenient shared transportation options intended to help reduce emissions and achieve the more sustainable future envisioned in SANDAG’s Regional Plan, the City of Carlsbad’s Climate Action Plan and the city’s Transportation Demand Management Program.

Meeting #11: COVID-19 restrictions in California kept most people out of the office, but that did not stop the projects or our transportation professionals from moving forward with great work. We had an abundance of award nominations in 2020 for projects and people to recognize. Our annual awards meeting was held virtually through WesternITE’s Zoom account, and we were excited to have special guests with us including Randy McCourt (ITE President), Neelam Dorman (WesternITE President), Mark Spencer (Past President), and Joe De La Garza (Vice President). With a combination of pre-recorded portions, animated transitions, and live acceptance speeches and election results, our members were entertained and enjoyed chatting up the screen to recognize the following award winners:

- Transportation Achievement Awards:
 - Complete Streets: City of Imperial Beach: Imperial Beach Boulevard
 - TSMO: Automated Vehicle (AV) Exclusive Lane
 - Safety: County of San Diego Montezuma Valley Road
 - Planning: SANDAG Military Multimodal Access Strategy
 - Traffic Engineering: Friars Road / SR-163 Interchange
- Public Agency of the Year: City of Del Mar
- Transportation Professional of the Year: Saul Kane
- Young Transportation Professional of the Year: Matthew Cox
- Technical Document of the Year: Chula Vista TS Guidelines
- Transportation Project of the Year: Friars Road / SR-163 Interchange

Also, we were honored to recognize Tom Larkin as a San Diego ITE Distinguished Member. We enjoyed hearing highlights from Tom and others of his illustrative career and long-term influence on transportation.

Several award winners requested video files of the awards to use in their own promotional opportunities. The full awards meeting video is posted on our website (sandiegoite.org).

Student/Younger Member Support (15 points)

Meeting #10	Date:	October 8	Location:	Online	JOINT MEETING
Topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your Engineering Career Path from All Angles Panelists: Lima Saft, Caltrans; Jonathan Sanchez, Chen Ryan; Yari Ascencio, Kimley-Horn; Katy Cole, Fehr & Peers, and Kristin Gendron, Rick Engineering <i>Joint meeting with SDSU Student Section</i>				

ITE San Diego Section has a long-standing and continuing relationship with the San Diego State University (SDSU) Student Chapter. Student Chapter members are included in all meeting, workshop, and event announcements, and we

Submission for Outstanding Section/Chapter Award: ITE SAN DIEGO SECTION (continued)

have a dedicated SDSU Student Chapter Liaison (Juan Parra, Rick Engineering) who works with the SDSU Student Chapter Advisor (Arash Jahangiri, SDSU Professor) and SDSU Student Chapter President to ensure we provide worthwhile connections and opportunities to the SDSU Student Chapter.

In 2020, we hosted an online panel in a publicized joint meeting with the SDSU Student Chapter to help students gain perspectives to start their careers as transportation professionals and affect decisions in the early stages of their careers. Panelists represented public agency and private company professionals. The panelists and the students had candid discussions about internships, applying for their first jobs, and important experiences and opportunities in the early stages of their careers. SDSU Student Chapter members also participated in our two virtual happy hours, further developing connections and relationships with transportation professionals, and SDSU Student Chapter members also attend our regular meetings and webinars.

We are proud to have raised funds enough to award multiple student scholarships in 2020, with Alireza Darzian Rostami and Fidel Martinez Munoz each receiving \$1,000 student scholarships and Nicole Hurtado-Savin and Alexander Rivera Aguilar each receiving \$500 student scholarships. We also recognized an outstanding younger member, Matthew Cox, with the Young Transportation Professional of the Year.

Application of Technical Knowledge (10 points)

Meeting #2	Date:	February 13	Location:	City of El Cajon
Topic	• Regulations that Reduce Citywide VMT (Jason Geldert, City of Carlsbad)			
(Speakers)	• Mobility Choices and SB743 Implementation (Heidi Vonblum, City of San Diego)			
Meeting #3	Date:	April 16	Location:	Online through ITE International's GotoMeeting
Topic	• SB743 Workshop			
(Speakers)	(Erik Ruehr, VRPA; Minjie Mei, City of Santee; K.C. Yellapu, LLG Engineers; Katy Cole, Fehr and Peers)			

ITE San Diego Section members Erik Ruehr and Carlos Ortiz co-chaired the California ITE SB 743 Task Force that concluded their efforts in 2019, but ITE San Diego Section recognized, with other Southern California sections, that more work would be needed as SB743 would take effect in July 2020. Erik Ruehr continued leading efforts statewide to communicate implications of the legislation, implementation methodologies, and other effects on the practice of transportation engineering and planning in California.

The ITE San Diego Section's Transportation Capacity and Mobility Task Force prepared revised regional Transportation Impact Study Guidelines to incorporate SB 743. These are available as a resource for local agencies and consultants. For the April 16 meeting, ITE San Diego Section provided a webinar with a brief overview of SB 743 along with an overview of the San Diego Regional Guidelines, discussion on VMT estimation and VMT mitigation, the local agency perspective, and demonstrations of methodologies used in San Diego for VMT. As some portions of the regional guidelines have potential applications statewide, invitations were extended to ITE members outside the San Diego region, including international ITE Members interested in California's LOS to VMT initiative.

Networking Events (10 points)

Meeting #8	Date:	August 14	Location:	Online	SOCIAL, NETWORKING
Topic	Virtual Happy Hour				
Meeting #12	Date:	December 10	Location:	Online	SOCIAL, NETWORKING
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Due to COVID restrictions in California, we could not hold our annual networking events in traditional format. Instead, we hosted virtual happy hours to maintain networking opportunities in our area. Our virtual happy hours included mask contests, scavenger hunt games, bingo, raffle drawings, and an abundance of chatter and laughter. In the midst of an unprecedented time, our members, students, and colleagues made meaningful connections and memories through the lively happy hours.

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Our joint workshop with our SDSU Student Chapter also provided personal networking for our student members with professionals in the public and private realms of the transportation industry.

K-12 STEM Outreach (10 points)

None this year.

New Member Recruitment (10 points)

ITE San Diego Section has an established, strong presence in the San Diego region, and we have averaged 198 Section members per year over the last 5 years. We added 16 new members in 2020. Our new member recruitment channels include our monthly meetings (open to members and non-members), quarterly newsletters, sponsor outreach, and relative, updated content on our award-winning website. In 2020, as our meetings moved virtual, our new member recruitment also increased in the virtual world. In late 2020, we started an ITE San Diego LinkedIn Group and are reaching out to new potential members through LinkedIn connections. We are building our social media presence to recruit new members as well as to serve current members and the transportation industry.

Diversity and Inclusion (5 points)

ITE San Diego Section encourages an inclusive environment for all individuals, companies, agencies, and organizations who share the goal of improving transportation. Attendance and participation at all of our events include engineers, planners, students, retirees, vendors, private and public sectors, and younger members. We regularly ensure public agency representatives speak or lead discussions at our meetings, along with private industry representatives. In 2020, our public/private ratio of featured speakers was exactly 50/50. Also, while women only make up 13 percent of the engineering workforce (SWE 2019 report), a remarkable 33% of our featured speakers in 2020 were female transportation professionals.

Our membership demographics further illuminate our success in diversifying participation and encouraging an inclusive environment. We have a roughly 50-50 split of publicly employed versus privately employed members. In 2020, we achieved a boost in younger members – more than doubling our 2019 younger member numbers, and 26% of our ITE San Diego Section membership is female – double the percentage of women in the 2019 engineering workforce (SWE 2019 report).

Training/Professional Development (5 points)

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The combination of ITE San Diego Section meeting topics in February and April provided educational opportunities for understanding and implementing SB 743. In addition, Loren Bloomberg, the Global Technology Leader for Traffic Operations for Jacobs, gave training on “HCM's Freeway Facilities Methodology – The Right-Sized Tool for Planning and Operations.” His presentation showed how to use an alternative HCS tool, Freeval, to analyze traffic operations during early phases of a project.

Submission for Outstanding Section/Chapter Award: ITE SAN DIEGO SECTION (continued)

ITE San Diego Section understands how valuable our meeting presentations are to the professional development of colleagues in our industry. We post the presentation materials and/or recordings of our meetings, webinars, and discussions on our section website, allowing interested parties to review materials and contact appropriate colleagues after the meetings.

ITE San Diego Section also distributed to our e-mail contact list information on multiple sessions on SB743 impacts statewide to enable our members and non-member contacts access to professional development opportunities.

Field Trips/Technical Tours (5 points)

Due to COVID restrictions in California, we did not lead any field trips or technical tours in 2020.

Service Projects (5 points)

ITE San Diego Section members helped Zaki Mustafa, Past President of ITE, in delivering jackets to the Salvation Army office in Downtown San Diego in December, to be donated for homeless persons. Zaki and his wife raise money through their charity, Transforming a Life, a non-profit organization (www.transformingalife.org), and ITE San Diego Section is proud to support them.

Funding Support (5 points)

The COVID restrictions in California limited our annual fundraising events since group gatherings were not permitted. In spite of that, ITE San Diego Section was able to reinvest in our younger members by awarding \$3000 in student scholarships. The constraints of COVID response did not deter ITE San Diego Section from fulfilling our responsibility to invest in the future of our section and our industry.

LeadershipITE (5 points)

Our support of members interested in LeadershipITE is evidenced by the high interest of Section members in serving our committees, running for elected positions, and contributing to ITE success at the local and district levels. We have 21 active chairpersons and had multiple persons run this year for the Secretary position, eager to climb the officer ranks to lead ITE San Diego Section. Many of our ITE San Diego Section Past Presidents are still involved with ITE and are leaders in the community. We are proud that ITE San Diego Section Past President Ryan Zellers is currently serving as the Westernite Advertising Manager (through 2022). Although we did not have members participate in the LeadershipITE program in 2020, we continue to encourage ITE San Diego Section members to consider the many benefits of LeadershipITE. We are hopeful every year that one of our members will be selected for the program, and we stand ready to support all ITE San Diego Section members ready to apply.

Advocacy (5 points)

ITE San Diego Section worked with Ray Major, Chief Economist at the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), to educate and inform members about how COVID-19 response may impact the transportation industry. Ray provided detailed information on the COVID impact in the US economy and in the San Diego Region. Important projections indicate SANDAG is predicting a 13.2% decrease in revenue in the next two years, with revenue not reaching "normal" until potentially 2023.

ITE San Diego Section provided Saurabh Jayant (Caltrans) and Mychal Loomis (Kimley-Horn and Associates) with ample time in our September meeting to discuss the recently adopted 2020-2024 California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The SHSP serves as a guiding document for creating a collaborative environment for state agencies and local partners to work together, focus efforts on certain challenge areas identified from data trends, and develop impactful actions through engineering, education, enforcement, emergency response, and emerging technology strategies to reduce fatal and serious injuries. They also gave information on upcoming activities related to the SHSP and ways for ITE San Diego Section members to get involved.

Photos



< Screenshots from our networking happy hours



< Photos of our featured speakers from early 2020 in-person meetings