



Texas Department of Transportation

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“Smart Highway” in San Antonio’s Future

(San Antonio, TX)-- The Texas Department of Transportation’s (TxDOT) “smart highway” project, called TransGuide, scheduled to go on line in 1995 in San Antonio, utilizes high speed computer technology to help drivers anticipate traffic conditions-- in an effort to increase safety, reduce congestion and carbon monoxide emissions from vehicles stuck in traffic. TransGuide will monitor traffic conditions, control traffic signals and allow rapid response to accidents and emergencies.

The TransGuide System uses a sensor system installed in 26 miles of highway (IH 10,35, 37 and US 90 and 281 in the downtown area) to feed data to a high speed computer network for analysis. The first phase of the San Antonio District project started in February of 1993 with a cost of \$32 million. It is anticipated that San Antonio’s project will be used as a model for other states.

The project includes 50 changeable message signs and 359 lane control signals at 84 locations. In addition to the sensors, 52 cameras will be used to help identify problems. For example, if a traffic accident is the cause of the highway blockage, the camera will be turned on to identify the nature and severity of the incident and appropriate emergency services will be dispatched immediately.

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The network of traffic sensors, computers and signs all connect at the Operations Control Center (located at the Northwest IH 410 and IH 10 interchange) where a high speed computer will feed five giant video walls and individual computer stations with traffic information. The computer, programmed with 128,000 traffic solution scenarios, can react immediately to congestion caused by an accident, stalled vehicle or other roadway hazards and alert drivers to changing road conditions.

TransGuide is designed with advances technology, utilizing all the advantages of fiber-optics. Eventually, the TransGuide system will be expanded to cover 191 miles of freeways in San Antonio.

“TransGuide will provide a more efficient means of managing emergencies, construction, maintenance and special events. It will reduce vehicle delays saving time, money and helping the environment,” states John Kelly, the San Antonio District Engineer for the Texas Department of Transportation. “Most importantly, it will allow TxDOT to manage traffic on the freeway and possibly save lives by reducing response time to accidents,”

The San Antonio District of the Texas Department of Transportation is the developer of the Transportation Guidance System project. The prime contractor is AlliedSignal Technical Services Corporation, with a number of subcontractors including the H.B. Zachry Company, Browning Construction and AT&T Network Systems.

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