March was an extra busy month for staff in the Research Development Office (RDO). In addition to their normal workload, which included a FHWA Office of Operation IDIQ project proposal for me, they processed 26 TxDOT Traffic Safety proposals and 43 TxDOT RMC proposals.

Special thanks go to Mary Levine and Kristen Maldonado, who were responsible for processing the 26 Traffic Safety proposals. The total amount of the 26 proposals is approximately $3.7 million.

A second special thanks goes to everyone in RDO — Justin Malnar, Mary Levine, Erlinda Oliverez, Kristen Maldonado, Jesus Palomo, Fannie Davila, Denise Pineda, and Susan Adams — for processing the 43 RMC proposals. The FY 12 value of these proposals is approximately $4.9 million, with a total value for all years of $10.6 million.

A third special thanks goes to Bill Frawley, Ginger Goodin, Karen Lorenzini, Suzie Edrington, Joe Zietsman, and John Overman for taking the lead in developing RMC proposals. Many other researchers and support staff contributed to these and other proposals — so a fourth special thanks goes to everyone who assisted with RMC proposals.

Even with our diversification efforts, TxDOT is, and will continue to be TTI’s top sponsor. Writing strong RMC proposals is key to being selected on projects and maintaining ongoing research with the Department. As you all know, well done TxDOT research projects often lead to follow-up studies, TxDOT implementation projects, and NCHRP project statements.

Speaking of diversification, congratulations to Stacey Bricka for leading an NCHRP 8-36 proposal that was selected for funding. The study, Improving Travel Behavior Data for Alternative Fuel Vehicles: A Scoping Study, focuses on developing the scope for a larger project. Also, congratulations to Juan Villa, who led the TTI involvement in the recently selected IBI Group team on the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) Otay Mesa/SR 11 ITS project.

As you may have noticed from the newsletter heading, we have shortened the name of the research group to the Planning and Environment (P&E) Research Group. With the thought that “policy” is imbedded in both “planning” and “environment,” the new name seems to flow a little better, while still reflecting the major research areas of the group.

The new organizational structure is in place as of April 1. Please join me in congratulating and welcoming Ginger Goodin, Shawn Turner, and Joe Zietsman to their new roles as Division Heads, and Bill Frawley to his new role as Program Manager.

Thanks,

Katie
Staff Activities

Ginger Goodin, Reza Farzaneh, and Mark Burris presented a Research Development Seminar on Mileage-Based User Fees (MBUF) on March 3. They discussed current research projects and highlighted possible future research that might involve other groups with TTI. Trey Baker who is a key part of current MBUF research projects, helped respond to questions and provided additional comments.

Linda Cherrington gave a presentation at the South West Transit Association/Texas Transit Association Annual Conference in Austin on February 28. Linda’s presentation on the Impacts of the 2010 Census on Transit Agencies in Texas was in a session on Population and the Changing Landscape for Funding.

Katie Turnbull presented a paper, Transit in the Parks: The Role of Foundations and the Private Sector, at the George Wright Society Biannual Conference in New Orleans on March 16.

Teresa Qu, David Schrank, and Shawn Turner held a project kickoff meetings with Feida Traffic Engineering Company in Beijing March 10-14. The project will help them use their toll transaction data to monitor intercity travel times and speeds. TTI researchers will meet with them again in June and October, with Phase 2 work being discussed for 2012.

Welcome

Meredith Highsmith has joined the Transit Mobility Program as an Assistant Research Scientist. Meredith as a BA in Urban Geography and Technical Communications from Texas Tech University and a Masters of Applied Geography from Texas State University. She has experience working for the Capital Metropolitan Transportation Authority and TxDOT. Meredith is located in the Austin TTI Office and is working on TxDOT RMC and IAC projects, and a project for the Maricopa Association of Governments in Phoenix.

Staff Activities — Continued

Effective April 1, the P&E is organized in the following structure:

Environment and Air Quality Division – Joe Zietsman
Air Quality Analysis – Joe Zietsman
Environmental Management – Beverly Storey
Transportation Modeling – Dennis Perkinson

Mobility Division – Shawn Turner
Mobility Analysis – Shawn Turner
Transit Mobility – Linda Cherrington
Urban Analysis – Bill Frawley
Planning Division – Ginger Goodin
Austin Liaison Office – Ginger Goodin
Travel Forecasting – Phillip Reeder
Transportation Planning – Ed Hard

The Research Development Office and Juan Villa, Mexico City, also continue to be in the P&E.
Years of Service

The following P&Eers will celebrate a special anniversary with TTI this month:

Suzie Edrington — 5 Years

TRB Appointments

Matt Sandidge has been appointed a Young Member of the Transportation Planning for Small and Medium-Sized Communities Committee and the Transit Management and Performance Committee. Jeff Borowiec has been reappointed as secretary of the Aviation System Planning Committee.

April
John Wikander  4/2
Reza Farzaneh  4/10
David Ellis  4/20
Bonnie Duke  4/24
Jesus Palomo  4/26
Jett McFalls  4/30

May
Kevin Hall  5/5
Cliff Spiegelman  5/15
Montie Wade  5/20

Calendar of Events

APRIL 13 — SUPPORT STAFF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR
APRIL 27 — ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS’ DAY
MAY 3 — TTI EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DINNER, COLLEGE STATION HILTON
MAY 4 — ALL TTI DAY, EXPO CENTER, BRYAN
MAY 30 — MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY
JULY 4 — INDEPENDENCE DAY HOLIDAY