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HOT Chapter Newsletter



> Heart of Texas

Advancing women
Advancing transportation

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PRESIDENT’S LETTER

Ahhh! Can you feel the hint of fall in the air? It’s nice after such a HOT summer, right?

As we enjoy what we hope will be many pleasant days and nights with lower temperatures, we celebrate all that the HOT

Chapter has offered over the HOT summer months for the Heart of Texas transportation community. We hosted Lattes & Leadership events in June, July, and August. Our professional mentorship program provided both in-person and virtual presentations for our mentor/mentee pairs throughout the summer, with graduation scheduled for October. We came together to network at membership events, including the annual Member Only event honoring our Corporate and Agency Partners in August, when we recognized several of the women leading transportation efforts in the public sector from across the region. More recently, we hosted the Professional Development Seminar and heard from eight great panels on the Lifecycle of a Project and a keynote speaker reviewing the past, present, and future phases of the Oakhill Parkway project.

Thank you to everyone who joined us for these great HOT Chapter events and to the chapter committees and volunteers who helped make them happen!

We still have more to look forward to as we enter the fall months. On October 18, the program luncheon will feature the new director of the TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division, Doug Booher. Stay tuned for the opportunity to register for this event and for the November program luncheon (topic and speaker TBD). The HOT Chapter will partner with the local ITE Chapter for our annual bike ride on October 28. And, the membership committee will host another great membership networking event in December.

The TransportationYOU program is gearing up again to offer mentoring opportunities for students at the Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders. If you have time and interest in serving as a mentor for this important program and want to learn more about this opportunity, please contact our new TransportationYOU Committee co-chairs, Ashley Martinez and Kelly Rees, at transportationyou@wtshotchapter.org.

You also will have the opportunity in the coming weeks to submit your nominations for our annual recognition awards. Be ready to submit your nominations for the regional innovative transportation project, employer of the year, Rosa Parks Diversity Award, woman of the year, Ray LaHood Man of the Year, and chapter member of the year. Then, in December, chapter members will get to vote to decide the award winners, to be presented at the 2024 Awards and Scholarship Gala.



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Transportation Leader
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Engineer
Freese & Nichols

Max Hoffman

Planner II
HNTB

TRANSPORTATION YOU CO-CHAIRS

Ashley Martinez, PE, LGPP

Kimley-Horn
Civil Engineer

Kelly Rees, PE

Kimley-Horn
Transportation Engineer



If you want to get the most out of your participation in the Heart of Texas WTS Chapter, please join WTS or encourage your friends and colleagues to become a member. Information on how to join can be found at <https://www.wtsinternational.org/mission/membership>. Be sure to take a look at our many different committees, reach out, and get involved. Our committees are always looking for new members and innovative ideas.

If you have any questions about WTS or the HOT chapter, please do not hesitate to contact me or anyone else on our board.

Enjoy the changing season and the many opportunities that it presents in the community and on the WTS HOT Chapter calendar. I look forward to seeing you at one of our future events.

Tonia Norman

MEMBERSHIP EVENTS

A note from outgoing Membership Chair, Kat Streff

In early 2023, WTS Heart of Texas’ Membership team recommitted themselves to presenting our 250+ local members with opportunities for exclusive networking events and access to tools for professional and leadership development by highlighting the programs WTS HOT Chapter has to offer.

On July 12th, we hosted our second members-only happy hour this year. Wanderlust Wine Co was selected as our venue for a unique wine-on-tap experience. Members enjoyed small bites, a cool (pun intended) venue with plenty of conversational seating, interesting artwork adorning every wall and ceiling, and access to small group networking. During the event, we got to hear from Programs Chair, Laurie Simmons (AECOM), and Professional Development Chair, Christen Eschberger (HNTB), as they highlighted upcoming programs and events.

With the momentum of a successful summer filled with heavily attended luncheons, professional development seminars, CP/AP programs, and happy hours propelling us into fall, the membership team, currently led by Kat Streff (Kleinfelder) kept us cool at the Dogwood Rock Rose in late September. This membership drive happy hour offered members and non-

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members a chance to come together for a laid-back networking hour and introduced a new Membership Committee Chair, Pooja Patel (Kimley Horn). Those in attendance enjoyed some cold drinks, sliders, and tacos and were also entered in a drawing for our two door prizes. Our annual membership drive gives the WTS HOT chapter the opportunity to engage with our community in hopes to aid in the continued growth of our chapter. This effort ultimately gives us the ability to expand services and offering to our membership.

Next up, look for much more to come from Pooja and her team as well as the year-end Holiday Event for WTS HOT chapter! It's been my pleasure serving you! **Outgoing Membership Chair, Kat Streff**



OCTOBER LUNCHEON

The Future of Environmental Reviews in Central Texas



Earlier this year, the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 passed Congress in order to avert hitting the debt limit, and combined into the bill were major changes to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). So what does this mean for future infrastructure projects undergoing environmental reviews here in Central Texas? Join us at our WTS Heart of Texas Chapter October luncheon to learn more about the Council on Environmental Quality's Phase II Rulemaking for amendments to NEPA and as well as other major initiatives going on at TxDOT from Director of Environmental Affairs, Doug Booher.

Booher joined TxDOT in March of 1991. Except for a three-year stint in the private sector, he has worked 25 years at multiple TxDOT offices, including the Austin District, the Texas Turnpike Authority Division, and the Environmental Affairs (ENV) Division, where he served as the deputy director.

In 2021, Doug Booher became the director of TxDOT's Environmental Affairs Division. The division oversees TxDOT's environmental programs, develops environmental policies, coordinates with TxDOT's districts on environmental issues, manages contracts and conducts environmental investigations.

He has a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Texas-San Antonio and earned a master's in information science from the University of Texas at Austin.

The annual Member Only event honoring our Corporate and Agency Partners in August recognized several of the women leading transportation efforts in the public sector from across the region.



CP/AP Honoree Bios

Every Year, WTS HOT Chapter Honors our Corporate and Agency Sponsors and their staff. Please congratulate 2023’s honorees and learn more about their impressive contributions to the Transportation industry, below.



ANNICK BEAUDET – CITY OF AUSTIN, PROJECT CONNECT – MOBILITY OFFICE

Annick Beaudet, MPA, AICP has over 20 years of experience in land use and transportation planning. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Urban Geography from the University of Texas at Austin and a Master of Public Administration from Penn State. She led the update to the City’s multimodal transportation plan through adoption in 2019. The Austin Strategic Mobility Plan laid the foundation for the successful Project Connect vote in 2020, Austin’s \$7B public transit expansion program. She has held positions in multiple City departments through her career in public service, including Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Manager and Austin Transportation Department Assistant Director. She currently serves as the City’s Mobility Officer, leading the team at the City of Austin Project Connect Office supporting the Austin Transit Partnership and Capital Metro with Project Connect implementation. In 2023 she was nominated by the American Planning Association Texas Chapter for induction into the American Institute of Certified Planners National College of Fellows, the highest honor that can be bestowed upon an urban planner.

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NADIA BARRERA-RAMIREZ – CAPMETRO, CROSS-AGENCY TRANSIT & MOBILITY PROGRAMS MANAGER



As the Manager for Cross-Agency Transit and Mobility Programs at CapMetro, Nadia Barrera-Ramirez works with a focus on data-driven results to make transit safer, faster, and more reliable. She manages the Transit Speed and Reliability Program at CapMetro, which works collaboratively with the City of Austin and TXDOT to build innovative infrastructure that not only prioritizes transit but incorporates bicycle and pedestrian movements. Additionally, CapMetro now operates and maintains MetroBike a public bike sharing system. Nadia and her team are leading CapMetro through a strategic planning effort to integrate public bike sharing into the transit network and to optimize operations of the bike sharing system. Prior to her time at CapMetro, Nadia was the City of Austin’s Urban Trails Program Manager and encouraged active transportation through programming, education, and construction of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.



FABIOLA BOWERS – CTRMA, TRAFFIC & INCIDENT MANAGEMENT MANAGER

Fabiola has over 10 years of experience in the tolling industry which includes enforcement and customer service. In her current role, Fabiola oversees CTRMA’s Traffic & Incident Management Center which is responsible for actively monitoring real-time traffic cameras, traffic sensors and managing the variably-priced toll rate on the first and only managed lane facility in the Austin Region. Prior to joining the CTRMA, Fabiola was a 9-1-1 dispatcher in a public safety communications center.

PATRICIA DAVIS – CITY OF HUTTO, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ENGINEER



Patricia Davis serves as the City of Hutto’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Engineer, a role that she has held since May 2023. In Hutto, Patricia is responsible for developing, overseeing, and managing the City’s CIP projects. In addition to budgeting, she also directs assigned City staff and outside consultants in the monitoring of projects, including regular status updates from initial concept through project completion.

Patricia has nearly three decades of professional experience in engineering, construction, planning and capital infrastructure for public improvement projects at the local, state, county, and federal levels. Prior to joining the City of Hutto, Patricia spent 16 years with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). In addition, she has over 15 years of experience in capital projects, spanning across the water, wastewater, transportation, facilities, drainage, and parks programs.

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MARISABEL RAMTHUN – TXDOT, DESIGN DIVISION DIRECTOR



Marisabel joined TxDOT in 1998 as an engineering assistant for the Waco district in the Belton area office. In 2002, she transferred to the Austin District’s Advanced Project Development section. She then went to work in the Georgetown area office managing construction projects. She has held several leadership positions in the Austin district including Burnet area office assistant area engineer, Austin district advanced project development director, and most recently as the Austin district director of Transportation Planning and Development where she oversees \$10 billion in project development.

She is also a graduate of TxDOT’s Leadership One and WTS International Mid-Career Signature Leadership Training. Ramthun is a 1996 graduate of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus with a degree in electrical engineering.

ANGEL JOHNSON – CITY OF AUSTIN, CITY ENGINEER



Angela Nikolaevna Johnson, P.E., Ph.D. has 30 years of engineering experience, including 11 years in technical education and research, 17 years of Civil engineering and surveying experience, and 14 years of leadership experience in the public sector.

Angela joined City of Austin (COA) in January 2008 as an Engineering Associate C, Watershed Engineering Division, Watershed Protection Department. She has advanced her career through the years and joined the Public Works Department in August of 2017 to serve as Supervising Engineer with the Office of the City Engineer, Street and Bridge Operations.

Angela has been serving as the City Engineer since February of 2021, providing professional leadership to 32 members of the Office of the City Engineer Division within Street and Bridge Operations of Public Works Department, City of Austin. She is overseeing public right-of-way development review; public infrastructure maintenance management including bridges and roads; customer service dispatch, right-of-way investigation and public asset management OCE programs.

JEN PYNE – AUSTIN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP, EXECUTIVE VP OF PLANNING AND RISK MANAGEMENT



Jennifer oversees several planning and risk management functions for Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) to include project controls, planning, environmental regulatory compliance, and the organization’s federal grant administrative process.

Previously, Jennifer worked for Valley Metro in Phoenix, AZ as Assistant Director of the Capital Development department, which was responsible for delivering light rail, streetcar, and transit facility capital projects. While at Valley Metro her responsibilities included oversight of construction projects, transit planning, community relations, business impact mitigation, and environmental compliance. Jennifer has more than 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors with transportation planning, NEPA compliance, facility siting and environmental studies, and community engagement for public infrastructure projects.

She has also served as a mentor in the annual mentorship program for the WTS Metro Phoenix chapter.

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TRACIE BROWN – CTRMA, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



Tracie Brown, Director of Operations for the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, is a driven leader in the transportation community and a long-time member of Women in Transportation, Heart of Texas Chapter.

In her role as the Mobility Authority’s Director of Operations, Tracie oversees the collection of more than \$220M in toll revenue annually and manages the agency’s customer service, traffic and incident management, and violation enforcement functional areas. Tracie also directs the agency’s customer care and retention strategies. These strategies extend to Tracie’s leadership in local, regional, and national toll interoperability efforts to make the use of toll roads and toll payment easier for customers.

CAROLINE MAYS – TXDOT, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & MODAL PROGRAMS



Caroline Mays serves as director of Planning and Modal Programs. In this role, she is responsible for the management and control of the Aviation, Maritime, Public Transportation, Rail, and Transportation Planning and Programming divisions.

Mays is a recognized regional, state, and national leader experienced in multimodal transportation planning and programming, policy, and project development. She was responsible for TxDOT’s statewide multimodal freight, international trade, and statewide corridor planning programs and was instrumental in establishing the multimodal freight planning program, developing the first multimodal Freight Mobility Plan, and the Texas-Mexico Border Transportation Master Plan.

TERRY COOK – WILLIAMSON COUNTY, COMMISSIONER PRECINCT 1



Terry is in her second term as a Williamson County Commissioner for Precinct 1 and will be running for re-election in 2024.

Regional Involvements:

- CAPCOG’s Clean Air Coalition –representative for Williamson County on this association working to analyze, report & initiate improvements for air quality related to ozone and particulate matter (quarries, lime, and concrete plants in Wilco) for a 10 county region in Central Texas.
- CAPCOG’s Capital Area Regional Transportation Planning Organization – 2023 vice chair and representative for Williamson County to focus on central Texas roads, corridors, highways, and all things transportation.
- Wilco Recovery-Oriented System of Care, ROSC – member of this wide consortium of counselors, housing specialists, professionals for mental health and substance use disorders and non-profits with foci on treating mental health and/or substance use disorders.
- Women in Transportation – Heart of Texas Chapter member – engaged, networking and learning through this powerful and fun organization.
- Williamson County Homeless Coalition –member providing support and seeking solutions to end homelessness in Wilco.
- East Williamson County Coalition – member helping identify needs and services and securing

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resources and funding for this portion of the county.

- Supporting member of the Water Coalition of Central Texas and the North San Gabriel Alliance in Williamson County.
- United Way of Greater Austin Success by 6 – working group member to expand Pre-K3 &4 opportunities for disadvantaged children to position them, when entering kindergarten, to be healthy, happy and ready to succeed in school and life.

Education:

- Master’s Degree, Biomedical Engineering, Duke University
- Bachelor’s Degree, Biochemistry, East Carolina University

Terry can be found often giving speeches, writing poems, and telling stories in support of many non-profit organizations in Williamson County, including Hope Alliance, Helping Hands of Georgetown, United Way, the Round Rock Serving Center, and regional organizations such as Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area and Texas State Technical College. If she can help, she’ll be there.

LINDSEY WOOD – AUSTIN TRANSIT PARTNERSHIP, EXECUTIVE VP ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION



Lindsay brings local and national experience in planning, design, and delivery of rail and transit project.

Prior to joining ATP, she served in the private sector as design manager for the preliminary engineering of light rail elements of the Project Connect program from downtown to the airport. She brings multi-disciplinary engineering experience delivering large transit projects and programs through collaboration and a strong history working with our partners and stakeholders in Austin.

Lindsay is a past Chapter President of the WTS (Women’s Transportation Seminar) Heart of Texas Chapter and has a passion for introducing STEM career opportunities to girls early in their educations. As a 4th generation Austinite, she earned her degree in Architectural Engineering from the University of Texas at Austin and is a registered professional engineer in the state of Texas.

TRANSPORTATION YOU

WTS Transportation YOU

We are looking for a few good mentors!

After a brief hiatus we are back with Transportation YOU and we need your support to make the program a success!

We are in need of mentors for high school students.

Contact transportationYOU@wtshotchapter.org & secretary@wtshotchapter.org for more information.



Foresight Women of WTS

Established in 2015, Foresight Planning & Engineering Services, LLC has grown to a headcount of 40 and recently opened a new headquarters in Northwest Austin just inside the Williamson County Line. A Platinum Level Corporate Partner of the WTS Heart of Texas (HOT) Chapter, Foresight has amassed an incredibly talented team over the past eight years and regularly has multiple staff representing at HOT Chapter events. Included among them are four women who are active members of the WTS HOT Chapter:



ERIN PERKINS-WATRY – PRESIDENT/PLANNING SERVICES DIRECTOR

Erin co-founded Foresight in 2015. She has more than 23 years of experience in the public and private sectors as a planner, public involvement project manager, and technical writer for large-scale corridor planning projects, feasibility studies, policy and program development and tracking, and local government planning. She leads the firm’s strategy development, planning, and communications functions and provides project management support to clients for CEI and planning projects throughout the state.

Erin has been an active member of the WTS HOT Chapter for almost two decades and her photography often sparks bidding wars at the annual WTS HOT Chapter Gala.



LYNN ISAAK, PE, PMP, MBA – ENGINEERING SERVICES DIRECTOR

Lynn has more than 31 years of multidisciplinary transportation experience and has served in both a public and private sector capacity to manage design-bid-build and design-build projects, programs, and portfolios from planning through final completion. She has a proven track record of leading teams to successfully deliver high profile design and construction projects. With a focus on providing high quality deliverables and strong customer service, Lynn ensures the Foresight Engineering Services Team successfully achieves project goals and meets client and owner needs.

Lynn has been a member of the WTS HOT Chapter since 2005. She received the Maggie Walsh Leadership Legacy Scholarship in 2021 while working toward her MBA and served as the Mentoring Chair in 2023.



JACKIE SARTOR – BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Jackie Sartor is a marketing professional with over 23 years of experience in strategic marketing, business development, event planning, communications, publishing, and fundraising. Jackie focuses on winning work for the firm and managing client relations.

Jackie became involved in the WTS HOT Chapter after attending her first gala in 2010 and has served in various capacities on the Board of Directors including Gala Chair, Fundraising Chair, 2016 WTS International (WTSI) Conference Co-Chair, Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President. During her Presidency, the HOT Chapter established the WTS Transportation Policy Fellowship with the Mayor’s office at the City of Austin in 2019 and gained their 501c3 status by creating the WTS Heart of Texas Foundation in 2020. Jackie continued to serve as the Registered Agent and a Director-at-Large of the WTS Heart of Texas Foundation through 2023. From 2021-2022, Jackie served on the

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WTSI Chapter Operations Committee as the Subcommittee Chair responsible for developing Chapter Agreements and Standard Operating Procedures. In 2023, Jackie also served as Gala Co-Chair, the HOT Chapter’s Representative to the Southwest Region Council, and on the WTSI 2023-2024 National Programs Committee.



CATHERINE COUSAR – PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Catherine has six years of experience in public affairs and three years of experience providing planning, public involvement, and administrative support for transportation projects throughout Texas.

Catherine has served on the HOT Chapter’s Communications Committee since she joined WTS in 2021.

UPCOMING EVENTS

2023 Upcoming

events

- Oct

10/18 Monthly Luncheon
10/28 Bike-n-Brunch
- Nov

11/15 Monthly Luncheon
11/15-16 WTS International
Leadership Conference
- Dec

TBD Holiday Networking Event

Future of WTS HOT Chapter Committees



Ashley Martinez, P.E., LGPP



Pooja Patel, P.E., LGPP



Kelly Rees, P.E.

Ashley Martinez, P.E., LGPP: Co-Chair for Transportation YOU

As a native from the Lubbock, TX area, Ashley is a graduate from Texas Tech University and has her Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. Ashley joined Kimley-Horn and Associates on August 1, 2011, in the Lubbock office as a civil engineering analyst working on roadway projects for multiple agencies in the Texas Panhandle. In March 2018, Ashley made the move to the Austin area to help fulfill a large need for transportation infrastructure in Central Texas and has transitioned her focus more toward urban roadway design, serving many of the local municipalities. Ashley became a member of the WTS HOT Chapter in 2019 and participated in the chapters Mentorship Program that same year. Ashley has maintained her membership throughout her time in Austin and recently served as a volunteer on the Gala committee. She looks forward to this new opportunity to serve as Co-Chair for Transportation YOU. Ashley and her husband, Ben, reside in Liberty Hill and enjoy traveling, visiting local wineries, exploring new coffee shops, and keeping up with their niece and nephew’s sporting events.

Pooja Patel, P.E., LGPP: Membership Chair

Born and raised in the Dallas area, Pooja started her career in 2014 with Huitt-Zollars, Inc. in Dallas after graduating from the University of Texas at Arlington with a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and Master of Engineering in Infrastructure Systems and Management. She worked as an E.I.T. designing public works projects ranging from roadway design, drainage and utilities, trail networks, and site developments for multiple agencies across the DFW metroplex. In January 2020, Pooja joined Kimley-Horn in Austin, concentrating her management and design experience on multimodal, urban roadway, and now, transit improvement projects around Central Texas and TxDOT districts. Pooja became a member of the WTS HOT Chapter in 2022 and served as a volunteer on the 2023 Gala committee and is looking forward to continuing her service in WTS as Membership Chair. In her free time, Pooja enjoys hiking through National Parks, traveling, going to music festivals and concerts, making her new house a home, and spending time with her nieces in Dallas.

Kelly Rees, P.E: Co-Chair for Transportation YOU

Kelly grew up in the suburbs of Houston and pursued a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and Master of Engineering in Civil Engineering from Texas A&M University. At Texas A&M, Kelly was involved in multiple engineering outreach organizations for middle and high school aged girls to promote an early love for math and science. After graduation, Kelly joined Kimley-Horn’s Austin office in 2019 working as a transportation analyst working on transportation planning and traffic operations projects. Since then, Kelly has worked on a range of projects including traffic operations analysis, municipal signal timing and implementations, temporary and permanent signal design, corridor studies, freeway and arterial corridor modeling, safety benefit and cost analysis, special event traffic management plans, and data analysis. Kelly has been involved in WTS events since 2019 and has been a full member of the WTS HOT chapter since 2022. Kelly is a member of the 2023 WTS Mentorship Program and is looking forward to the opportunity to serve as the Co-Chair for Transportation YOU and continue to provide mentorship and guidance for young women. Kelly and her husband Travis have several annual travel goals for new countries and National Parks, enjoy spending time anywhere in and around the water, love trying new foods, and enjoy life with their two cats.