

# CONNECTOR

A publication of

**UIC** Urban  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT CHICAGO Transportation Center  
COLLEGE OF URBAN PLANNING & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Contents

**2** Director's Message

**3** UTC at TRB

**4** UTC Update

**6** METSI Report

**7** Recent Publications  
& Presentations

**8** Upcoming Events



## UTC Forges Ahead Into A Transportation Challenged Future

The Urban Transportation Center (UTC) has taken up the challenge of transportation's future in an ever increasing global economy through research and publication across a broad spectrum of innovative transportation management and transit technologies. UTC is located in a global city at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

President Bush, in his state of the Union Address, called for universities to be competitive in the fields of math and sciences with an emphasis on research in new energy alternative fuels to help America eliminate its dependence on Middle East oil by 2025. This sentiment was echoed by the President of the National Academy of Sciences in his address to the Transportation Research Board (TRB) at the Board Members' Luncheon. UTC is bringing those visions to reality in its work, the outcome of which will create more transit ridership and better customer service through improved traffic forecasting, route selection, innovative technology, and education.

UTC's Director, Piyushimita (Vonu) Thakuria, summed up the research done here at the TRB with her paper, "Travel Behavior Trends: What Does the Future Hold?" For UTC, the future is now. Several Urban Transportation staff and faculty presented papers or poster sessions at TRB this year. Abolfazl (Kouros) Mohammadian and Jie (Jane) Lin were part of the workshop titled "Transferability of Household Travel Survey Data: Getting by Without

a Travel Survey." The Workshop covered transferability of survey data to similar study areas. Sadayuki Yagi presented at the Doctoral Student Research in Modeling workshop with his recent work and paper on "An Activity-Based Microsimulation Model of Travel Demand: Applications to Air Quality and Policy Analysis."

Siim Sööt discussed the correlation between sprawl and obesity in his presentation of "Merging Your Neighborhood BMI with Census Data: A Closer Look." Siim Sööt and Gidon Berman presented a poster session titled "Trends in Minority Commuting Behavior: What Does the American Community Survey Tell Us?" They discussed the changing nature of travel behavior among minority groups and the potential utility of the American Community Survey (ACS) as an emerging source of travel information.

Kouros Mohammadian and Yong-Ping Zhang presented their work on the "Transferability of National Household Travel Survey Data to Local Areas: Disaggregate Approach." The paper assessed the potential approaches on how to transfer and use the information collected in one context to another. This paper presented the process of developing a model that may help to reduce or eliminate the need for a large-scale data collection in the application context for MPOs and DOTs.

Neighborhood type and lifestyle are important factors influencing household

## Faculty & Staff

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**George Yanos**

Principal Research Programmer

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**Jie (Jane) Lin**

Assistant Professor, CME

**Abolfazl (Kouros)****Mohammadian**

Assistant Professor, CME

**Sue McNeil**

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**Peter Nelson**

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Head of Computer Science

**Anthony Pagano**

Associate Professor  
Managerial Studies

## Director's Message *by Piyushimita Thakuriah (Vonu)*

Dear Colleagues,

January is always an exciting time although many of us (including myself) take a while to adjust ourselves to the pace of semester time after the holidays. This January was very special. Our students and faculty won several prestigious awards and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them once again. Geoffrey Fruin and P. S. Sriraj were awarded the Transportation Research Board's Outstanding Paper Award for their paper "An Environmental Justice Approach to Evaluating the Equitable Distribution of a Transit Capital Improvement Program." Dan Yu, former UTC research assistant, who recently completed her master's degree in Civil Engineering, was selected as the recipient of the 2005 Neville Parker Award for Outstanding Masters Research Paper in Science and Technology. It is one of the six highly competitive and prestigious awards given annually by the Council of University Transportation Centers (CUTC). Sonali Tandon, MUPP student, won the 2006 Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship awarded by the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) Greater Chicago Chapter. Finally, Sadayuki Yagi (Syd), Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, won the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) - Illinois Section 2005 Best Paper Award. Congratulations to all of you!



TRB, which many of us attended, was a hectic time. This year's highlight is that UTC faculty, students and staff made a total of 18 podium or poster presentations! I attended several sessions and committee meetings and of all the things I heard, I was most struck by the linkages that are being analyzed between transportation, the built environment and health. Our very own Siim Sööt chaired a session on "Health and Transportation" where he also presented his work on Body Mass Index (BMI) and neighborhood characteristics. I also heard about some fascinating research directions that are being taken jointly by TRB and doctors and health professionals in the National Institute of Health and National Cancer Institute on the relationships of cancer to the activity levels, the built environment and transportation. Naturally, I hope that this type of research, which could affect critical health outcomes for millions, would be at the top of our agenda in the years to come.

Warmest regards,

*Vonu Thakuriah*

## UTC at TRB, continued



L: Gidon Berman presenting his poster

and individual travel behavior. “What Neighborhood Are You In? Empirical Findings on Relationships Between Residential Location, Lifestyle, and Travel” presented by Jie Lin and Liang Long explored this subject in more depth. Their research suggested the factors that influenced household travel: socio-economic status, residential location, land use, household life cycle, activity type, and ethnicity.

In the same area of research, Yong-Ping Zhang and Kouros Mohammadian presented their findings in a paper titled “National Level Analysis of Lifestyle Choices Using NHTS.” The paper discussed the typical household lifestyles in the U.S. with respect to transportation.

Papers from the 2005 First Annual Interuniversity Symposium on Infrastructure Management colloquium were presented. The symposium provided an opportunity for Ph.D. students to present their work on infrastructure management. The session presented cutting-edge research from young researchers, including UTC’s Daisuke Mizusawa. His paper, “Quantifying Benefits of Implementing Asset Management” discussed the cost for Asset Management Systems (AMS) implementation and operation. This research provides an outline of a generic

method for quantifying and evaluating the benefits of AMS implementation.

On Tuesday, Jane Lin presented at a poster session for environmental planning. Her poster titled “Making Informed Vehicle Scrappage Decision” suggested how to improve indicators for fleet vehicle replacement. Her results suggested that, in addition to the negative relationship between vehicle age and vehicle survival probability, there are other variables that also appear equally influential. Certain brands of vehicles have higher survival probabilities than others; the number of road calls, repairs, and the use of regular unleaded gasoline all appear to decrease vehicle survival probability. She also found the use of alternative fuels has positive effects on vehicle survival probability.

Jane Lin also presented with Santosh Mishra a second poster titled “Modeling Land Use, Bus Ridership, and Air Quality: Case Study of North River Industrial Corridor in Chicago.” This paper presented a demonstrative study of predicting potential automobile vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and emissions reductions due to transit service improvement using GIS. It was demonstrated that the ridership models combined with GIS tools and MOBILE6 models could be a useful screening tool for VMT and emissions reduction estimation for CMAQ projects.

“Development of Disaggregate-Level Truck Trip Generation (TTG) Model: Case Study of Furniture Chain Stores” was presented by Hyeon-Shic Shin and Kazuya Kawamura. The purpose of their research was to understand the recent trends of goods movement within the changing economy, goods movement behaviors, logistics and supply chain management (SCM), and

## News in Brief

### UTC Faculty Award



L-R: Fahim Mohamed, Arnab Chakraborty, P.S. Sriraj (sitting center), Avinash Sinha

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academies granted P.S. Sriraj, Research Assistant Professor, the Outstanding Paper Award for his paper titled “An Environmental Justice Approach to Evaluate the Equitable Distribution of a Transit Capital Improvement Program.”

### UTC Student Awards

Sadayuki Yagi (Syd), Ph.D. student in Civil Engineering, won the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE)-Illinois Section 2005 paper award. His paper was on a joint SP/RP mode choice model. He was a guest of honor at the ITE-Illinois section 2006 annual dinner banquet this January.

Dan Yu, masters student in Civil Engineering, won the Neville A. Parker Science and Technology Award for her research on the CTA and Tollway projects. She is one of the six winners of this year’s Council of University Transportation Centers (CUTC) awards, which was presented in Washington, DC on January 21, 2006.

Sonali Tandon, MUPP, won the 2006 Helene M. Overly Memorial Scholarship awarded by the Womens Transportation Seminar (WTS), Greater Chicago Chapter.

### Presenting Abroad



L: P.S. Sriraj Presenting at Anna University

P.S. Sriraj was invited to make a presentation in India at the Anna University, Madras Anna in November 2005. His presentation topic was "The Use of Spatial Decision Support Systems and Multi-Criteria Decision-Making Under Uncertainty in Engineering and Planning," at the Institute of Remote Sensing.

### Regional Science Conference



L-R: Vonu Thakuriah, Jane Lin, Yihua Liao, Standing, L-R: Jung-Eun Lee (U of Tokyo), Liang Long

The 2005 North American Meeting of the Regional Science Association International was held at the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas November 10-12. Members of UTC faculty and graduate students presented their research results at the conference and later talked about

their research with many people. Vonu presented findings from a longitudinal analysis on the effects of individuals with varying degrees of transportation access. Jane showed research results of the transferability of household travel survey data. Yihua presented linear models of household vehicle usage. During the conference they met fellow scientists from around the world studying in a variety of disciplines.



George Yanos, a native of Youngstown, Ohio, currently resides in Oak Park. He is the Principal Research Programmer for the Urban Transportation Center. George has a long history of computing support services with the University of Illinois at Chicago. In 1969, he began working for the University of Illinois Chicago Circle Campus, now called UIC at the Academic Computing and Communications Center (ACCC). His

### The Engine Behind the Research

job ended there in 1993. He became part of the UTC staff in 1997.

**Connector:** What other responsibilities does your job entail?

**George:** I participate on UTC projects that call for special software or statistical analysis. For example, I have worked on the UIC Shuttle Bus Locator and was part of the recently published BMI and Sprawl study.

**Connector:** What are the benefits to this job that you enjoy the most?

**George:** I enjoy the variety, flexibility, and company.

**Connector:** What book do you think every graduate student who works at UTC should read before moving on with a degree?

**George:** I think they should all read *The Rise of the West* by William McNeil. Essentially, *The Rise of the West*

is a very intelligently written historical examination of the history of human civilization. The book suggests that from the Neolithic beginnings of grain agriculture to the present, major social changes in all parts of the world were triggered global markets.

**Connector:** What is the one thing our foreign and non-Illinois residents should take the time to see and do while they attend UIC? And, why?

**George:** I think everyone should go for a long ride along the lake by bicycle to give them a sense of the possible.

## UTC at TRB, continued

analyze their impacts on truck trips. The study suggested a potential of the approach and its transferability in other industries. In addition, location characteristics and store type have good explanatory powers for predicting delivery trips.

“Organizational Structures for Brokerage of Paratransit Services” was presented by Anthony Pagano and Paul Metaxatos. The benefits of interagency coordination of public and human service transportation have been recognized and promoted by federal, state, and local governments. This paper contributed toward the goal of achieving successful interagency coordination of paratransit services by developing a conceptual model of alternative organizational structures for paratransit brokerage implementation and then applying the model to three paratransit implementations in Illinois: Peoria, Macomb, and South Central Illinois Mass Transit.

“Spatial Decision Support System for Low-Income Families: A Relocation Tool for The Chicago-Land Region” was presented by P.S. Sriraj, Mark Minor, and Vonu Thakuriah. The objectives of the paper were three-fold: To develop the analytical hierarchy process to rank census tracts for relocation purposes of individuals, to present a prototype of the Spatial Decision Support System (SDSS) with an example based on data from the Chicago region, and to evaluate the impact of relocation choice of individuals by using a spatially unconstrained approach and by comparing the travel times for commute trips for different scenarios. Using data from the six-county northeastern Illinois region, the SDSS was developed and showcased with the help of a sample application. The demonstration of the software brought a user-friendly must-have appeal to

Tuesday’s closing sessions.

On Wednesday, “Determinants of Perceived Importance of Targeted Transportation Services for Low-Income Riders” was presented by Vonu Thakuriah, P.S. Sriraj, Siim Sööt, and Yihua Liao. The objective of this paper was to study the impact of the subjective dimension of trip making using an index of Perceived Service Importance (PSI). An ordered probit model was developed to explore the relationship between the PSI and socio-demographics, service type and characteristics, employment attributes, as well as travel related factors. Results indicate that the PSI is indicative of extreme transit dependency, and calls for the use of these types of measures in addition to hard measures in evaluating low-income transit services.

“Nationwide Survey of Transportation Planning Courses” was a lecture given by Jiangping Zhou. The primary objective of the survey was to find out what topics are currently being covered and the level of emphasis on the topics. The secondary objective was to identify topics for which educators would like the U.S. Department of Transportation to provide an annotated bibliography. The survey and the project were welcomed by most surveyed universities and educators and the survey results have multiple potential uses.

TRB sessions concluded on Thursday with a presentation by Vonu Thakuriah and Yihua Liao. In their paper, “Transportation Expenditures and Ability to Pay: Evidence from Consumer Expenditure Survey,” the two discussed data collected at several levels of aggregation. Spatial resolution showed that mobility increases with income when measured in vehicle miles traveled and automobile ownership. Investment in mobility through the purchase and operation of private

automobiles and the consumption of public transportation services was found to improve the ability to increase one’s income and quality of life.



L-R: Claire Gron, Piyushimita (Vonu) Thakuriah, Kristen Hoschouer

### UTC Alumni Reception

UTC hosted its annual alumni reception at the 1919 Grill inside the Hilton Washington. The reception welcomed current and past professors of UTC, students, and alumni. Attendees included former UTC Director and current professor at the University of Delaware Sue McNeil, Kathy Ames of the Illinois Department of Transportation, and Lorraine Snorden, Long-Range Planning Director of Pace Suburban Bus.



L-R: Paul Metaxatos, Mary Kay Christopher, Lorraine Snorden

## Metropolitan Transportation Support Initiative (METSI) News

Two major projects are underway in Lake County. The first is involved with a number of municipalities and employers in north east Lake County. Joe DiJohn has been asked by representatives of the City of Waukegan to facilitate a meeting of stakeholders to discuss transportation needs and possibly establish an organization to solve transportation problems.

A meeting was held on January 12 in Waukegan where the cities of Waukegan and North Chicago and fifteen employers representing over 25,000 employees came together to discuss mutual needs. The next steps will be to survey the organizations needs and to develop a strategy to minimize disruption from upcoming roadway reconstruction projects.

A second project has begun with the Lake County Coordinated Transportation Services Committee. UTC staff is providing technical assistance to the group, which plans to undertake a county-wide transportation coordination study. We are assisting in the development of a grant application to fund the planning study. It would include a survey of paratransit providers and a survey of users and potential users to determine demand.

The study, although similar to the efforts undertaken in DuPage, Kane and McHenry counties, would differ in two ways: first, the study would also include inter-county trips, not just those within the county, and second, a committee of private providers is proposed to provide innovative solutions to transportation problems.

Four METSI supported papers were recently completed. "Homeownership in the Chicago Area: Trends Leading the Nation" was authored by Siim Sööt with assistance from Joe DiJohn. Siim presented the paper at the recent TRB annual meeting. "The Comparison of Different Truck Trip Generation Techniques at the Disaggregate Level: A Case Study for Retail Stores" and "A Model Planning Process for Cargo Oriented Development- A Case Study in Chicago" were presented to TRB and ACSP annual conferences by Kazuya Kawamura. Siim Sööt, Lise Dirks, Paul Metaxatos, Kouros Mohammadian, George Yanos and Jiangping Zhou authored "Are Sprawl and Obesity Related? Evidence from the Chicago Area."

## Publications and Presentations *UTC faculty & RAs in italics*

### Publications

*Sööt, S., L. Dirks, P. Metaxatos, K. Mohammadian, G. Yanos and J. Zhou.* Are Sprawl and Obesity Related? Evidence from the Chicago Area. METSI Working Paper Number 2006-1. January 2006.

*Sööt, S. and J. DiJohn.* Homeownership in the Chicago Area: Trends Leading the Nation. METSI Working Paper Number 2006-2. January 12, 2006.

### Presentations

*Berman, J.G. and S. Sööt.* Short-Term Trends in Commuting Behavior: Putting the American Community Survey to Work. 102nd Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Chicago, March 11, 2006.

*Lin, J. and C. Chen.* Making Informed Vehicle Scrappage Decision. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 24, 2006.

*Lin, J. and L. Long.* What Neighborhood Are You In? Empirical Findings of Relationships between Residential Location, Lifestyle, and Travel. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2006.

*Lin, J. and S. Mishra.* Modeling Land Use, Bus Ridership, and Air Quality: Case Study of North River Industrial Corridor in Chicago. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 24, 2006.

*Metaxatos, P. and A. Pagano.* Organizational Structures for Brokerage of Paratransit Services. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 24, 2006.

*Mizusawa, D.* Quantifying Benefits of Implementing Asset Management.

Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2006.

*Mohammadian, A. and Y. Zhang.* Transferability of National Household Travel Survey Data to Local Areas: Disaggregate Approach. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2006.

*Mohammadian, A. and J. Lin.* Transferability of Household Travel Survey Data: Getting by Without a Travel Survey. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 22, 2006.

*Ramasubramanian, L.* The Politics of Risk Communication: Advocating a Bottom-up Approach to Policymaking. 102nd Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Chicago, March 9, 2006.

*Shin, H. and K. Kawamura.* Development of Disaggregate-Level

## Publications/Presentations, continued

Truck Trip Generation Model: Case Study of Furniture Chain Stores. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 24, 2006.

*Sööt, S. and J.G. Berman.* Trends in Minority Commuting Behavior: What Does the American Community Survey Tell Us? Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2006.

*Sööt, S.* Merging Your Neighborhood BMI with Census Data: A Closer Look. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 23, 2006.

*Sriraj, P. S., M. Minor, P. Thakuriah, and L. Ramasubramanian.* Facilitating Housing Relocation with the Help of an Interactive Spatial Decision Support System – A Case Study of the Chicagoland Region. 46th Conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning, Kansas City, Missouri, October 27-29, 2005. Also presented at Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 24, 2006.

*Thakuriah, P., P.S. Sriraj and S. Sööt, Y. Liao* Determinants of Perceived Importance of Targeted Transportation Services for Low-Income Riders. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 25, 2006.

*Thakuriah, P. and Y. Liao.* Transportation Expenditures and Ability to Pay: Evidence from Consumer Expenditure Survey. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 26, 2006.

*Yagi, S.* An Activity-Based Microsimulation Model of Travel Demand: Applications to Air Quality and Policy Analysis. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 22, 2006.

*Zhang, V. and A. Mohammadian.* An Explanatory Analysis of Lifestyle Choice, Neighborhood Effects, and Travel Behavior: Applications to the Transferability of Household Travel Data. 102nd Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers, Chicago, March 11, 2006.

*Zhang, Y. and A. Mohammadian.* National Level Analysis of Lifestyle Choices Using NHTS. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 2006.

*Zhou, J.* Nationwide Survey of Transportation Planning Courses. Transportation Research Board 85th Annual Meeting, Washington, D.C., January 25, 2006.

## Advisory Board

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### CONNECTOR

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### UTC's Mission Statement

"The Urban Transportation Center (UTC) seeks to understand and improve urban transportation through the creation, application and dissemination of transportation knowledge while also making use of the Chicago metropolitan area."

## Student Theses

*Meekins, Stacey.* MUPP, Thesis: Identifying Transit Needs and Enhancing Service Within the North River Industrial Corridor. Fall 2005.

*Peña-Rivera, Norma.* PhD-UPP, Dissertation: Estimating Transportation Impact Indicators for a Regional Participatory Visioning Process: An Approach. Fall 2005.

*Shin, Hyeon-Shic.* PhD-UPP, Dissertation: Study on Modeling Truck Trip Generation: Disaggregate Approach Based on the Survey of Industries. Fall 2005.

*Thomas, Amit.* MUPP, Thesis: Techniques to Determine the Demand and the Optimal Locations for Park and Ride Lots for Bus Transit. Fall 2005.

## Upcoming Events

**April 4, 2006**  
**Richard J Daley Urban Forum**  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
for more information  
[www.RJDUrbanforum.uic.edu](http://www.RJDUrbanforum.uic.edu)

**June 2, 2006**  
**Transport Chicago Conference**  
for more information  
[www.transportchicago.org](http://www.transportchicago.org)

**June 8-11, 2006**  
**Planners Network Conference 2006**  
Chicago, IL  
for more information  
[www.uic.edu/cuppa/upp/pn](http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/upp/pn)

**August 6-9, 2006**  
**Institute of Transportation Engineers  
2006 Annual Meeting and Exhibit**  
Milwaukee, WI  
for more information  
[www.ite.org/AnnualMeeting](http://www.ite.org/AnnualMeeting)

**August 27-30, 2006**  
**Association for Commuter  
Transportation Internatioal  
Conference**  
Boston, MA  
for more information  
[www.actweb.org](http://www.actweb.org)

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