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Houston TranStar Introduces Mobile Route Builder *Feature offers smart phone users new option*

Houston TranStar has added a version of the Route Builder to its mobile Website to inform commuters about conditions along their routes to work or play.

Smart phone users can now create their routes and view real-time travel times and traffic conditions on Web pages designed for their mobile devices (Windows phones, Blackberries, Android-enabled phones and iPhones). Route Builder uses information collected from sensors along roadways to give motorists travel times and speeds.

“Houston TranStar’s Route Builder was a national leader in providing personalized travel information,” said David Fink, Assistant Manager of Transportation Management Systems at Houston TranStar. “It started as an option on our Website, and now we’ve made it available on any smart phone.”

To build a route, a smart phone owner starts at <http://traffic.houstontranstar.org/mobile> and selects a main roadway and cross street as the starting point. The owner continues choosing roads until the destination is reached. The most commonly-traveled routes can be saved for quick access later. Like all TranStar web tools, the Route Builder is a free service for those with a data plan from their Internet or mobile phone provider.

Route Builder is part of TranStar’s suite of traffic management services. In 2009, Houston TranStar reduced travel time in the region by more than 11.3 million vehicle hours, saving commuters \$47 million in lost fuel costs and a total of \$227 million.

Other tools on TranStar’s mobile Website include a map with travel times and speeds, camera snapshots, incident information, construction zones, road closures and freeway message signs. Android and iPhone users also can view weather radar on the mobile map.

Houston TranStar is a collaboration between four government agencies that coordinate and enhance transportation and emergency management services in Southeast Texas. The agencies include the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Harris County, Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) and the City of Houston.