

December 27, 2005



**MEDIA ALERT  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 27, 2005**

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**HOUSTON TRANSTAR ADDS EVEN MORE REAL-TIME  
TRAFFIC MAP COVERAGE TO AWARD-WINNING WEBSITE**

"Westpark Tollway and Sam Houston Tollway South Real-Time Traffic Now On-Line at [www.houstontranstar.org](http://www.houstontranstar.org)"

(Houston, Texas) ---- Houston TranStar announces the most recent expansion of the Houston Area Real-Time Traffic Map. The new coverage includes 20.8 directional miles on the Westpark Tollway and 73.6 directional miles on the Sam Houston Tollway South and East. The expansion is a partnership between the Houston District of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Harris County Toll Road Authority (HCTRA).

The new Westpark Tollway coverage uses ten new monitoring stations and extends from State Highway 6 to South Rice Avenue in both directions. The new Sam Houston Tollway coverage extends from US 59 (Southwest Freeway) south and east to Interstate Highway 10 (East Freeway) using 12 new monitoring stations. The recent expansion brings the total directional miles monitored close to 690 (each direction of covered roadways plus HOV coverage) and total number of monitoring locations to 300.

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The Houston TranStar traffic monitoring system measures travel speeds on Houston area freeways and HOV lanes by using toll tag reader stations and over 1.5 million toll tags (transponders) distributed by HCTRA. The system determines the travel speeds on roadway segments by calculating the time it takes a vehicle equipped with a toll tag to travel a predetermined distance between two toll tag readers mounted above the roadway. The traffic monitoring system has been operational since 1994 when it was installed by TxDOT.

Today, over 70 percent of Houston area freeway miles are instrumented with toll tag readers, with coverage focused on the busiest corridors. The vehicle speeds derived from the system are used to produce color-coded speed maps for the greater Houston region's freeways. These maps display real-time traffic and are used in traffic operations for traffic management and incident detection. It is available free to the public via Houston TranStar's web site [www.houstontranstar.org](http://www.houstontranstar.org). The traveler information derived from the system is provided to the public through media reports, displayed on numerous roadside dynamic message signs, and on the Houston TranStar website for both computer and mobile device access. The travel times provided by the system are a critical part of media traffic reports and the central focus of the Houston TranStar website, which is accessed by more than 206,000 unique visitors each month and approximately 100 million accesses per year. This level of internet activity makes the Houston TranStar website one of the most visited transportation web pages in the nation.

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The traffic monitoring system is used as a traffic operations management tool for Houston TranStar personnel to monitor traffic operations on freeways and major arterials in the Houston region. It is also used as a data source for providing historical measures of Houston area traffic conditions and as a source for publicly available, real-time traffic information for the Houston freeway, tollway and HOV lane systems.

The Houston TranStar website ([www.houstontranstar.org](http://www.houstontranstar.org)) has received numerous awards for achievement. Awards have included the Top Traveler Information Website Award presented by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) & American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), 2001, 2002 & 2004; the MIT/Accenture Digital Government Award for State and Local Government Innovation; the Pathfinder Award for Quality Team Achievement on the Houston Traffic Website Committee, AASHTO, 2002; and the Award for Pioneering Mobile Access to Real-Time Traffic Information, Intelligent Transportation Society of Texas, 2002.

For more information about the Houston TranStar Real-Time Traffic Map or the traffic monitoring system, please contact Mr. Jack Whaley, Director for Houston TranStar at 713-881-3000 or visit [www.houstontranstar.org](http://www.houstontranstar.org).