Safer Roadways
THE CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Over the decades, our roadway network has seen steady improvements in safety, but further safety enhancements will depend more than ever on innovation and careful resource allocation. CTS researchers are working now to provide for the safety of our driving environment in ways that are as productive and cost-efficient as they can be.

Roadway analysis
Determining cost effectiveness of potential roadway safety improvements, including road widening, bridges and other construction and maintenance activities. The resulting cost/benefit scenarios can help transportation planners get the greatest good from a shrinking source of roadway funding.

Traffic signals and signs
Studying visibility and comprehension of traffic signs and lane markings, in part by examining the effects of different colors, symbols and typefaces. These studies produce guidelines that help transportation agencies produce signs and pavement markings that are easier to understand. Evaluating the effectiveness of red light cameras (also referred to as automated enforcement), by reviewing the link between red light violations and crash frequency and severity, and by comparing actual before and after conditions at locations where red light cameras have been used. The resulting evidence can be potentially useful to both traffic engineers and elected officials alike.

Crash analysis
Drawing practical insight from the mountains of data contained in The Crash Records Information System (CRIS) and the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). By asking the right questions, researchers can get answers that help determine – among other things – physical conditions of crash trends and effectiveness of different types of safety improvements.

Planning
Each of the 50 states is required to maintain a current Strategic Highway Safety Plan to guide priority setting and policy implementation. CTS researchers each year assist the Texas Department of Transportation in producing this essential document.