



**CANDIDATE STATEMENTS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**  
**Candidate for Secretary/Treasurer or International Director**

## **Mike Surasky, PE, PTOE**



- **Candidate's professional biography, including number of years of ITE membership, transportation experience and accomplishments:**

Currently WSP's Southeast Region Operations Manager, Mike is located in the Raleigh, NC office. With over 23 years of experience, he has developed the skills to lead projects in the fields of traffic engineering, transportation planning, work zone traffic control, roadway design, roundabout design, signing and marking, and signal design. In Mike's current role, he is responsible for the finances and staffing of the region that includes 350 employees in 8 states that almost exactly mirrors the SDITE geography. Mike has been an active member in ITE for most of his career including being an active member at the NC State University ITE Chapter.

- **Prior service to the Southern District; prior service to your state ITE section; and prior service to other organizations and other qualifications:**

- SDITE: SDITE Board, 2018-2020, SDITE Co-Chair SPAM (Annual Meeting) Committee (2019-present)
- NCSITE: Current Board Member (2020) as SDITE Rep, Past President (2018), President (2017), Vice President (2016), Secretary (2015), Annual Meeting Chair (2011-2015), TEC Chair (2010-2011)
- City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Greenways Advisory Board to City Council (2010-2016, Vice Chair 2014-2015, Chair 2016), Town of Clayton Recreation Advisory Board (2017-2019), City of Raleigh Leadership Institute (2005)

- **Reasons for running for office:** I believe in the Southern District of ITE and want to be a part of the continued success. SDITE is very special to me and I want to be able to keep what makes us great, which is our individuality. International ITE is trying to homogenize the sections/districts, but I believe there is great value in the local sections/districts for each member. I also thoroughly enjoy the family atmosphere in both NCSITE and SDITE. I believe that this is more than just a normal professional organization and I want to give back where I can.

- **Discussion of the candidate's goals and priorities as a member of the executive board, and**
- **Discussion of how the candidate anticipates accomplishing his/her goals:**

- To continue to support the strength of the section by working together to further the transportation industry while also allowing the section and each district to keep its distinctiveness. Here are the goals/priorities and how they will be accomplished:
  1. **Learn from each other:** Create web-based or app-based forums and have regular meetings between leaders in the sections. Continue to create sessions at the annual meetings and student leadership summits where section officers can connect. The result will be that each section will learn what may work and share ideas.
  2. **Introduce additional soft skills training at meetings:** Continue to encourage training and meeting sessions about communications and project management, both at the district and section levels.
  3. **Create (Keep) specific awards for SDITE:** This will allow SDITE to show some personality
  4. **Accentuate safety:** become a Vision Zero champion and participate in Vision Zero events in each state as well as create a safety program track at district and section meetings
  5. **Ensure that we include all modes:** Be an advocate for complete streets and transit policies
  6. **Include resiliency as a factor in transportation financing:** Encourage our public members and partners to include resiliency as an emphasis in the project financing and planning process.
  7. **Get more involvement from public members:** Make events more affordable for public agency members
  
- **Discussion of the challenges and opportunities the candidate believes the profession will face in the coming three years:**
  - **Fill the talent supply gap:** Support STEM programs locally so that we can encourage more high and middle school students to go into infrastructure planning and design opportunities
  - **Teaching soft skills:** Skills that were not taught in college but are eventually expected of all employees in their career such as communications and financial planning.
  - **Change:** Even beyond three years, this industry will move to using technology more and we need to get out of a build-out mindset and find practical, efficient solutions. Merely because a practice is prevalent may be the poorest reason for continuing it. ITE should be a leader in the use and study of new technologies.
  
- **Discussion of the challenges and opportunities the candidate believes the sections, district or international ITE will face in the coming three years:**
  - **Competition of professional organizations and our members' time:** How can ITE become the transportation organization of choice? How will we give our members the best value for the cost?
  - **Better inclusion of planners and extend the services of ITE:** Move away from solely being known for our "E"
  - **Keeping our public agency members engaged:** ITE needs to not only encourage agency members to attend meetings but stay active members. ITE's value is higher with more agency member involvement.