

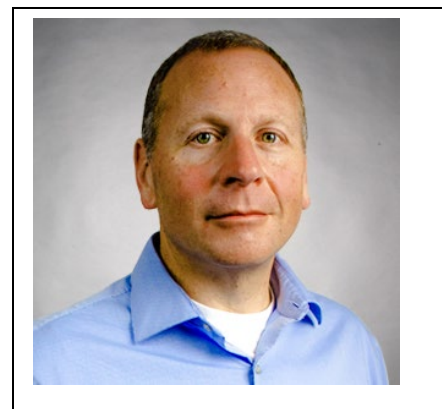


## CANDIDATE STATEMENTS/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Candidate for International Director

### Mike Surasky, PE, PTOE

Chief Operating Officer, LJB Inc.



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

Currently LJB's Chief Operating Officer, Mike is located in the Raleigh (Garner), NC office. With over 25 years of experience, he has developed the skills to lead projects and professional teams 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 overall business operations and part of the strategic direction for LJB, a 205-person firm that has Infrastructure/Transportation as one of its major practices. Mike has successfully worked for both public agencies and private consultants where he has grown businesses on multiple occasions in his 25-year career. 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. Mike is a Professional Engineer in NC, SC, VA, and GA, and a Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE).

- **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); LAC Co-Chair for 2021 SDITE Virtual Annual Meeting; LAC Co-Chair for 2024 SDITE Annual Meeting in Wilmington, NC.
  - NCSITE: Board Member (2019-2020) as SDITE Rep, Past President (2018), President (2017), Vice President (2016), Secretary (2015), Annual Meeting Chair (2011-2015), TEC (Traffic Engineering Council) 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 am very honored to be nominated as a candidate for International Director representing Southern District. I am extremely proud to be a Southern District Member and want to be a part of the continued success. I 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. SDITE is incredibly special to me, and I want to be a part of maintaining what has

made us great, which is our individuality and our volunteers. While there is value in an overarching International ITE organization, there is also tremendous value in the local sections/districts for each member. Each section/district has something that makes them special, and I do not want that to be lost on the International ITE Board. We all must remember where we came from, and I can add more of that perspective to the International Board while representing Southern District. Southern District is a wonderful place, and we should be able to share all our ideas and thoughts with other Districts around the world.

- **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 District by working together to further the transportation industry while also fostering distinctiveness in the sections and districts. Here are my goals/priorities and how they will be accomplished:
  1. **Listen to our membership:** The first thing to do in any new position is a fact-finding mission, this should include going to sections/districts and listening to the membership. What are the challenges? What are the solutions? What do they think offers value? There may be different local priorities, but most likely, there will also be common themes. We need to assess the current programs and priorities to make sure ITE is offering value to all members.
  2. **Enhance the value of ITE:** As an ITE Board member, I will be part of a team that dives into the International ITE budget to ensure that our members are getting the best value for their money. Rather than focusing on the profitability of the organization and developing content to sell to members, we should be talking about how we can increase the value of the organization. This should include the development of free opportunities, better prices for annual meetings, and more training opportunities.
  3. **Identify priorities from SDITE and International ITE Strategic Plans:** There are some common threads between the strategic plans: diversify our membership, provide more training, broaden outreach and communication, and attract and retain professionals in our industry. To achieve our highest objectives, we will need to narrow the number of priorities, so we are not a mile wide and an inch deep. That focus needs to happen so we can achieve our goals.
  4. **Be part of the team that will take ITE into the future:** In the next few years, the ITE Board will most likely set the next strategic plan and choose the next leader of our organization. My experience in my career and ITE, makes me a suitable candidate to be part of that change. I want to be part of the group that sets the table for the next generation of transportation professionals through change management.
  5. **Develop programs that enhance the views of our industry with the general public:** Professional organizations like ITE need to better market our industry to the general public. This needs to include better understanding of how we develop transportation plans and projects in this country and worldwide. We need to be more transparent to the public and fight to increase our place in the world and our industry value.
  6. **Enhance the value of our industry:** This ties in with the previous goal: explaining our place to the general public should enhance our industry and our value, as well as our need to the general good. If you ask anyone why they got into this industry, they most likely say that want to do this for the general good. Our industry is proud of the projects it completes and the things it does to increase mobility for all people. That pride should show up in the value of what we do, and our industry should be treated as such. Other industries have figured this out, but we are not there yet.
  7. **Diversify our membership:** This should be done in two ways: diversity of race/gender/age of our membership, but also the diversity of where our members work: public agencies, municipalities,

private entities. We need to develop programs that will offer tiered costs/fees to both less experienced members and our seasoned members, as well as for our public agency members. No one should be made to feel that they cannot be included or belong to the organization. This also goes to deepen the breath of expertise in our membership to include those professionals that work in planning, enhanced mobility solutions, and big data. It is critical that we not only have a diverse membership, but a diverse leadership group and involvement from everyone.

8. **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.
- **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. SDITE has done a lot of creating training that can be shared with all ITE.
    - **Change:** Even beyond this term of three years, this industry will move to using technology more and we need to 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 innovative technologies to not only show that the new technologies can be effective but also proven to be safe.
  - **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:** Determine how ITE can become the transportation organization of choice. We need to 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.