

Texas Department of Transportation Partners with TAPCO, Significantly Reduces Wrong-Way Drivers

As wrong-way drivers became a regular occurrence on San Antonio roadways, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) San Antonio District knew they had to take action in order to prevent future accidents.

Problem:

The tipping point came on March 15, 2011, when a San Antonio Police Officer was killed in the line of duty by a wrong-way driver.

"We knew wrong-way drivers were a problem but it became an issue we needed to address back in March 2011 when a police officer was killed in a head-on crash," said John Gianotti, TxDOT Transportation Engineer from the San Antonio District. "Everybody in town wanted answers pretty quick, so we started actively looking into what we could do to combat the issue."

Shortly thereafter, the San Antonio Wrong-Way Driving Task Force was formed to gain a better understanding of wrong-way drivers, how often they occur and potential solutions to address the problem.

The first full year of San Antonio wrong-way driver data collection revealed 274 wrong-way driving events resulting in 19 crashes and seven fatalities, with 72 percent of events occurring at night. Most-importantly, the data identified a 15 mile stretch on US-281 as a frequent wrong-way driver entry point.

With this new actionable insight, TxDOT San Antonio District determined they needed a solution capable of alerting night-time drivers traveling the wrong way on exit ramps.

Solution:

"When we started looking for solutions, we contacted TAPCO to see what they could offer," said Gianotti, who was then introduced to the TAPCO LED-Enhanced Wrong-Way Blinker-Sign®. "We found something that was readily available, affordable and we could buy right away."

The TAPCO LED-Enhanced Wrong-Way BlinkerSign® is a common starting point for wrong-way driver prevention and



One of many TAPCO wrong-way solutions installed on San Antonio exit ramps

San Antonio Wrong-Way Statistics: 2012–2017

Reduction of Wrong-Way Driving Events.....	29.31%
Project Cost.....	\$377,605
Annual Cost Savings.....	\$248,680
Cost Recovery Time.....	1.5 Years

Texas Department of Transportation San Antonio District

consists of eight flashing LED bulbs embedded in the sign, a solar panel, a control unit and a battery unit.

In November 2012, John and his team completed the installation of 56 TAPCO LED-Enhanced Wrong-Way BlinkerSigns on 26 US-281 exit ramps.

"The flashing wrong-way [BlinkerSign®] has been a tremendous help to us," said Gianotti. "They have been twice as successful as I ever thought they would be."

Results:

Nearing the six-year mark since installation, TxDOT San Antonio District has seen a significant reduction in wrong-way driving events.

"We have about six years of good data that shows, on the US-281 corridor, about a **30**

percent reduction in the reports of wrong-way calls," said Giannotti.

Not only has the number of wrong-way driving events

declined, but the cost of installing the technology has resulted in an **annual cost savings of \$248,680** based on the reduction in responding to crashes and overall crash costs.

"Once we saw these results, we started putting Wrong-Way BlinkerSigns everywhere else," said Gianotti. "We have put these signs on IH-10, IH-410, IH-35 and some of our other major highways around town where we know we've had wrong-way issues."

There are now approximately 150 TAPCO LED-Enhanced Wrong-Way BlinkerSigns strategically placed on San Antonio highways.

Preventive Measures:

With the proven success of the TAPCO LED-Enhanced Wrong-Way BlinkerSign®, TxDOT San Antonio District continued their wrong-way driving prevention efforts in January 2017 by integrating 17 new BlinkerSigns within their current Advanced Traffic Management System, Lonestar.

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- John Gianotti, TxDOT
Transportation Engineer

"It's very helpful to an organization like us that cannot always respond with new innovative ideas and products like TAPCO can," said Gianotti.



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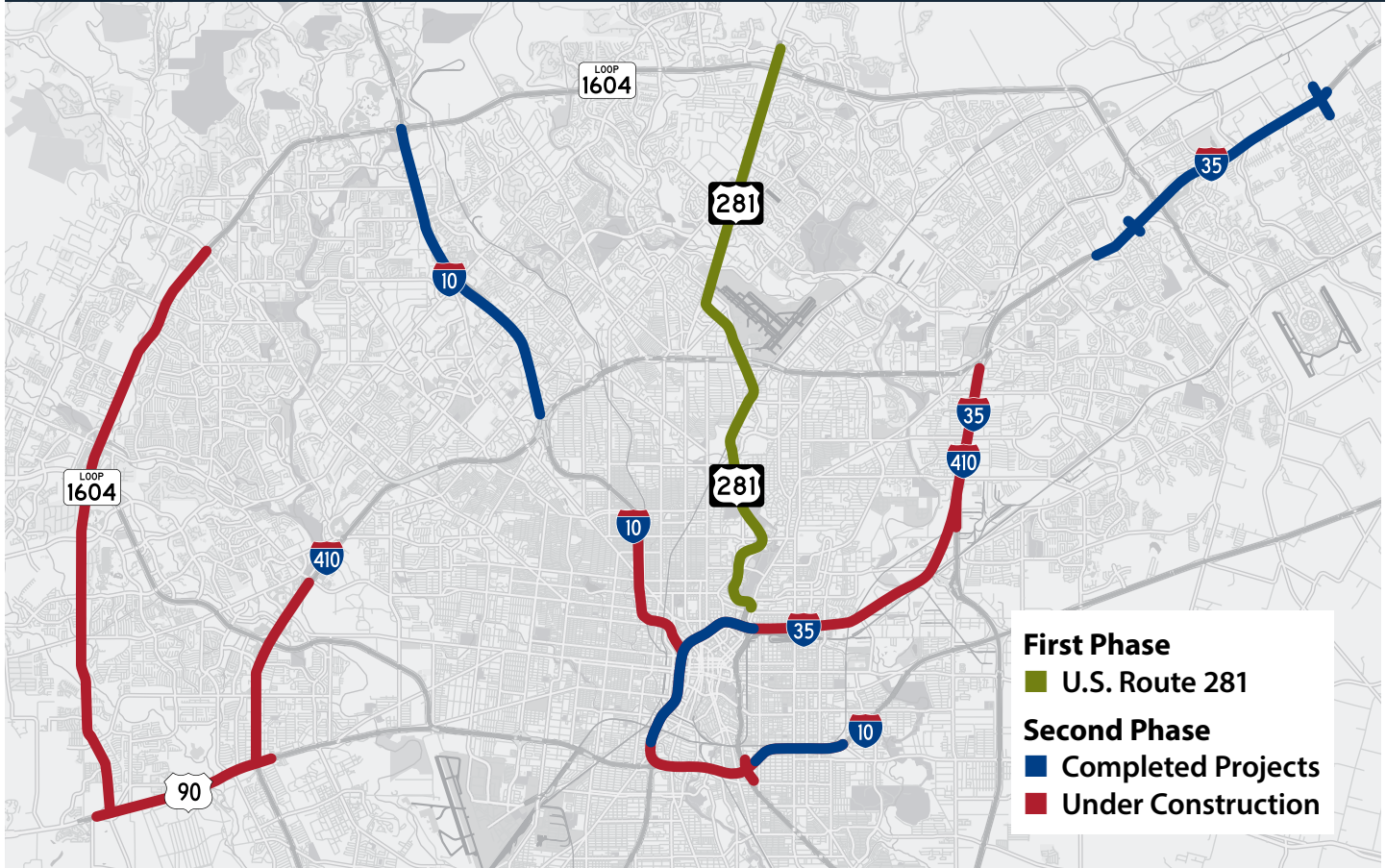
“When we started this six years ago, we didn’t know what we were going to do. We didn’t know what everything was going to look like, and having TAPCO willing to work with us, learn with us and advance the technology and capability of their products available to us, was huge.”



Worried about wrong-way drivers? Save lives today and get started by downloading the TAPCO Wrong-Way Solution Brochure.

[Read it Now](#)

San Antonio Wrong-Way Driver Prevention Project



U.S. Route 281 was the first completed wrong-way driver prevention project in San Antonio. Additional projects have since been completed while others are currently under construction as of Oct. 2017.