Dr. Kara Kockelman is the 2020 recipient of the Walter Isard Award for distinguished scholarly achievement. Kara Kockelman is Professor of Civil Engineering at University of Texas at Austin. She has held multiple named Chair and Distinguished Professor positions during her career and now holds the Dewitt C. Greer Centennial Professorship in Engineering. Professor Kockelman has held many visiting and honorary Professorships at numerous institutions around the world. She has won countless awards and honors. For example, she was voted one of the world’s Top 100 Young Innovators for MIT’s Technology Review, and was the recipient of the Western Regional Science Association Tiebout Prize, NARSC Hewings Award, and the American Society of Civil Engineers Energy Division’s Stephen D. Bechtel Jr. Energy Award. Dr. Kockelman served as NARSC President in 2020 and organized the 2009 NARSC meetings. Professor Kockelman is a frequent speaker at universities and workshops, being especially popular for her recent work in high technology and autonomous vehicles. Dr. Kockelman received her Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from University of California at Berkeley.

Professor Kockelman represents the best of Regional Science in interdisciplinary research. Her main contribution exemplifies the long line of Regional Scientists examining transportation, with her recent work being at the interface of technological innovations and transportation. As of fall 2020, she has published 174 peer-reviewed journals and 25 book chapters, as well as two edited books. She has also served as Associate Editor of Journal of Regional Science and on the editorial boards of International Regional Science Review and Papers in Regional Science, among others.

Professor Kockelman has made key contributions in a wide range of research primarily focused on transport and land-use decision making; shared and autonomous vehicle systems; statistical modeling of travel behavior; location choice; energy and climate issues; economic impacts of transport policy; and vehicle crashes. Professor Kockelman’s recent work on autonomous vehicles has been especially hailed as being at the frontier for this emerging technology. Her research has significant societal value, being frequently used in transportation and land-use policymaking.

Professor Kockelman is widely cited. As of early November 2020, she has accumulated nearly 8,700 citations in Scopus and 19,000 in Google Scholar. Her work has appeared in Regional Science and Urban Economics, Annals of Regional Science, Journal of Regional Science, Papers in Regional Science and the 2017 Regional Research Frontiers edited volume, among many other outlets. Her research has been supported by some 80 grants and projects, exceeding $35 million in funding to date.

Professor Kockelman is widely recognized for her significant theoretical and methodological contributions to Regional Science over the course of her career.

The North American Regional Science Council is therefore pleased to present the 2020 Walter Isard Award for distinguished scholarly achievement to Kara Kockelman.