



MISSOURI LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
— LOCATED AT MISSOURI S&T —

SUMMER 2024

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Photo by: Sam O'Keefe

Missouri LTAP Staff

Heath A. Pickerill, Ph.D.
Director

Nicole Annis, Ph.D.
Assistant Director

Kristi Barr
Program Coordinator

Pat Diaku
Administrative Assistant

Tina Monson
Education Program Coordinator

Lauren Gehner
Safety Circuit Rider

Shelby O'Keefe
Communications Coordinator

Missouri LTAP Advisory Committee Members

Ashley Buechter — Local Programs Administrator, MoDOT

Bryan Boyce — Construction Service Team Leader, Great Rivers Engineering & MACCTO representative

Darryl Griffin — Presiding Commissioner, Osage County & local agency representative

Jen Harper — Research Director, Construction and Materials, MoDOT

Tom Honich — Traffic Liaison Engineer, MoDOT

Ramona Huckstep — Policy and Membership Associate, Missouri Municipal League

Eric Landwehr — Director, Cole County Public Works & APWA Mid Missouri Chapter representative

Aaron Lock — Senior Assistant Road Superintendent, Cole County Public Works & MACTO representative

David Lomax — Presiding Commission, Marion County & CCAM representative

Kevin Luttrell — Road Superintendent, Horseshoe Bend Special Road District & local agency representative

Sean McGonigle — Risk Manager, Missouri Association of Counties

Bruce McGregor — Director of Public Works, City of Olivette & APWA representative

John P. Miller — Safety Engineer, FHWA Missouri Division

John Myers — Missouri S&T; Missouri Center for Transportation Innovation Director

Rebecca Rost — Environmental Specialist, FHWA Missouri Division

Brent Shulte — Senior Research Analyst, Construction and Materials, MoDOT

Derek Weber — Director, Northeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission & MACOG representative

Kurt Wengert — Technical Division Manager, Jefferson County Public Works & local agency representative

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello everyone!

The spring and early summer is always a busy time of year with the semester wrapping up and preparing for travel to various meetings and conferences. This year has been especially busy as I carry out responsibilities as an officer for the National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA), which includes attending regional meetings. Missouri is part of the North Central region, which gathered in Bozeman, Montana on June 4-5. I also had the opportunity to attend the Northeast region meeting on May 14-15 in Storrs, Connecticut. In addition, co-chairing the conference committee has been one of my main duties as the NLTAPA president-elect. The 2024 NLTAPA Conference is being hosted by the South-Central region and held in Albuquerque July 21-25. During the conference, I will begin my tenure as NLTAPA president. I look forward to representing Missouri and bringing more attention to our LTAP Center.

Missouri LTAP recently hosted the Missouri Concrete Conference on the Missouri S&T campus on April 23-24. This conference has been ongoing for over 60 years! We are excited to now be a part of the event each spring. We will soon start planning the Asphalt Conference, which is tentatively scheduled for December 3-4, 2024. Watch for upcoming information and a save-the-date notice. Hosting these conferences provides MO-LTAP with increased opportunities to reach local agencies as well as consultants and contractors involved in the transportation and infrastructure maintenance professions.

We also hosted a MO LTAP Advisory Committee meeting on May 7 in Rolla. The members offered several ideas on additional trainings that we could develop and offer to local agencies. One suggestion focused on creating an engineering technician level of training as part of the MO LTAP Scholars Program in partnership with the American Public Works Association (APWA) Missouri Chapter. Ideas for the new training program includes a class on pavement management and preventative maintenance as well as one on preventative maintenance of bridges. In addition, the Missouri Asphalt Pavement Association (MAPA), is interested in bringing back the technicians training for asphalt, which would be like the Super Pave course that was once held at Missouri S&T. This training could be included in the engineering technicians' training. Another suggestion was for MO LTAP to provide the theory portion of the CDL training as a means of generating revenue. Other providers charge on average \$250 per person. Finally, it was suggested that MO LTAP incorporate more safety programs such as setting appropriate speed limits, adopting proven safety counter measures, using automated enforcement at intersections, and providing training for ball bank indicators. The Advisory Committee meets each spring and fall to provide input and suggestions on new training ideas, focus areas, and partnership opportunities. MO LTAP wishes to thank all who serve on the Committee. A list of Committee members is available on this page to the left

Best wishes!

Heath A. Pickerill

Heath A. Pickerill, Ph.D.
Director, Missouri LTAP



In this ISSUE

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TRANSPORTATION SPENDING SURGES TO HISTORIC LEVELS. WILL US GET HISTORIC RESULTS?

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SAFE STREETS AND ROADS FOR ALL

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Contract awarded to provide technical assistance for grantees and potential grantees under the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program.



THE POWER OF ADVOCACY: STRENGTHENING PUBLIC WORKS FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

In the realm of public works, where infrastructure serves as the backbone of our communities, advocacy plays a crucial role in shaping policies, securing funding, and driving positive change.

NURTURING ETHICAL DUTY IN PUBLIC WORKS LEADERSHIP

In the realm of public works, ethics should serve as the rock-solid foundation for leadership. It's not a subject open for debate; rather, it is an implicit requirement that underpins our profession.

HOW MAINTENANCE EFFORTS CONTRIBUTE TO ROADWAY SAFETY

Every year nearly 12,000 people die when their vehicle leaves their lane on a rural road, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

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The Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) and Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) are composed of a network of 58 Centers — one in every state, Puerto Rico and regional Centers serving tribal governments. The LTAP/TTAP Centers enable local counties, parishes, townships, cities and towns to improve their roads and bridges by supplying them with a variety of training programs, an information clearinghouse, new and existing technology updates, personalized technical assistance and newsletters. Through these core services, Centers provide access to training and information that may not have otherwise been accessible. Centers are able to provide local road departments with workforce development services, resources to enhance safety and security; solutions to environmental, congestion, capacity and other issues; technical publications; and training videos and materials.

TRANSPORTATION SPENDING *surges to historic levels.* WILL US GET HISTORIC RESULTS?

Photo by: Sam O'Keefe

EVEN AS OFFICIALS MOVE SWIFTLY TO CLEAR AWAY BALTIMORE'S FRANCIS SCOTT KEY BRIDGE, WHICH COLLAPSED AFTER BEING HIT BY A CONTAINER SHIP, THE UNITED STATES IS IN THE MIDST OF AN UNPRECEDENTED PUSH TO UPGRADE ITS TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS.

The nation has never spent so much money on transportation, dams, sewer and water systems, electric transmission lines, and other networks. As a share of gross domestic product, today's effort is bigger than infrastructure spending under the New Deal and the most spent in the last half-century.

Looking strictly at the surge in transportation funding, experts on both right and left are cheering what the Biden administration has billed as a once-in-a-generation investment.

Whether the nation will get once-in-a-generation results, however, remains unclear. Inflation has eroded some of the federal funding boost. There are concerns that state and local governments are spending on mundane fixes instead of innovative projects with more bang for the buck.

"How far do the [federal] checks go? It's an open question," says Adie Tomer, an infrastructure policy expert at the Brookings Institution. Voters won't know until the spending bills run their course.

STILL, THE FUNDING SURGE IS SO BIG THAT IT WILL MAKE ITS MARK, INFRASTRUCTURE EXPERTS AGREE.

"By 2025, we'll see some improvements," says R. Richard Geddes, a professor and founding director of Cornell University's infrastructure policy program. "There will have been an effect on the quality of U.S. infrastructure because of the IIJA," the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed with a bipartisan majority in the early days of the Biden administration.

MAKING WISE SPENDING CHOICES

But has the money been well spent so far? Experts question some choices that states and localities are making under the infrastructure act, especially when looking strictly at transportation improvements.

For example, when Hani Mahmassani, director of the Northwestern University Transportation Center, searched nearby IIJA projects, he found a \$19 million grant to Chicago's O'Hare airport to upgrade a terminal with, among other things, a family restroom accessible to people with disabilities.

"Is this what we do for a once-in-a-generation type of opportunity?" he asks. Such projects are important but should be funded out of routine maintenance budgets, he adds. "Fixing toilets should not require an act of Congress."

Elsewhere, there are signs of innovation and opportunities for more transformative transportation projects. The biggest piece – and the fastest one out of the gate – is state-funded improvements to streets and highways. State departments of transportation regularly apply for

federal highway funds, so when the new money was made available in 2021, they were best placed to move quickly.

HOW FEDERAL DOLLARS SUPPORT LOCAL BUDGETS

The impact of the federal boost varies by geography. In large states, which fund a lot of their own road maintenance, the roughly 20% boost from Washington was nearly eaten away by high inflation in construction materials, says Jim Tymon, executive director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.

FOR SMALLER STATES, FEDERAL FUNDING CAN AMOUNT TO 80% OF HIGHWAY FUNDING, MAKING THE RECENT SURGE FAR MORE IMPORTANT.

Tiny Rhode Island, for example, boasts five notable road construction projects currently underway, paid for largely by the new infrastructure dollars.

Other projects have taken off much more slowly. Local governments, far less familiar with the demands of federal appropriations, have been slower than states to ask for money. And a \$5 billion program to fund electric vehicle charging stations across the U.S. has so far only produced only seven of them, scattered across four states, according to The Washington Post.

THE BROADER CHALLENGE IS THAT WHILE THE U.S. ROADS NETWORK IS VAST, IT IS ALSO OLD.

The last big push in road-building – the peak construction of the interstate highways – happened more than 50 years ago. Almost half of the nation's roads are now in poor or mediocre condition, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, in its latest assessment in 2021. Those deficiencies cost the average American motorist more than \$1,000 per year in wasted time and fuel, the ASCE estimates. It gave the nation's roads a grade of D.

Experts are optimistic the new spending push – which includes federal infrastructure spending beyond the law's new funds – will improve that grade. But they caution that maintaining an aging infrastructure should be an ongoing commitment. "It's like climbing up a hill of sand," says Mr. Tymon. "We hope it's not a once-in-a-generation improvement."

Some transportation networks are in better shape than roads. The nation's ports earned a B-minus from the ASCE in 2021 and railroads got a B. In both cases, private companies often pitch in to pay for maintenance. Some

experts are pushing for more private investment in other transportation networks.

IN SEARCH OF INVESTMENT AND INNOVATION

"We need to promote public-private cooperation," says Mr. Geddes at Cornell. "There's trillions of dollars of private capital on the sidelines waiting to invest."

The new infrastructure law includes funding innovations, such as expanding the use of private activity bonds, which allow states and localities to raise money to fund private infrastructure projects. The law also requires local governments to look at all models of infrastructure projects, including public private partnerships. "You can't just default to what you've always done," says Joshua Schank, managing principal at InfraStrategies, a transportation consulting firm based in Southern California.

One area ripe for innovation is urban transit, he adds. Subway, bus, and commuter rail systems are struggling to regain ridership in a post-pandemic era in which fewer people commute to work. Instead of bunching train and bus schedules around rush hour, they're providing more service during other parts of the day. Another experiment: microtransit (like an Uber but carries several passengers, making multiple stops and costing less).

The rebuilding of Baltimore's Key Bridge offers another opportunity for innovation. Stricter rules will automatically require better designed and protected piers than the one that collapsed when the cargo ship rammed it on Tuesday. The rebuilding can take advantage of advanced concrete and design innovations to make it more resilient.

When New York state replaced the Tappan Zee Bridge with the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge in 2020 over the Hudson River, it included dedicated bus lanes, a shared-use pedestrian/bike path, and more than 300 sensors measuring everything from temperature to fatigue on the cables and concrete corrosion.

The Key Bridge could become even more cutting-edge. "You can have lanes switch to 'bus only' or HOV [high-occupancy vehicles] very quickly," says Mr. Schank. "You can have, eventually, better communication with cars themselves that can provide safety benefits. ... Whenever you have the opportunity to rebuild infrastructure that's been around for a while, there's an opportunity to bring innovation."

csmonitor.com/USA/Society/2024/0329/Transportation-spending-surges-to-historic-levels.-Will-US-get-historic-results

SAFE STREETS AND ROADS *for all*

A New Wave of Funding for Local and Tribal Roadway Safety Innovation

A first-of-its-kind discretionary grant program called Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) is helping local communities design and deliver comprehensive roadway safety plans and improvements that will save lives and prevent serious injuries on the Nation's streets and roads. Created by the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, SS4A has the potential to vastly improve safety for all road users by providing \$5 billion over 5 years (fiscal years 2022–2026) directly to local and Tribal agencies to address their unique roadway safety needs.

"Through three announcements in 2023, SS4A grants have provided \$1.7 billion in direct funding to over 1,000 local rural, Tribal, and urban communities," said Paul Teicher, Senior Policy Analyst at the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). "Combined, the awards made to date will improve roadway

safety planning for around 70 percent of the Nation's population."

Two Ways to Access SS4A

SS4A funding is divided into two grant types. One is for safety action plan development, supplemental planning, and demonstration activities. The other is for plan implementation. Agencies are required to have safety action plans that meet specified criteria prior to applying for implementation funding.

"Under the SS4A FY 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity, more than \$656 million is available for Planning and Demonstration Grants," said FHWA SS4A Team Leader Jason Broehm. "These funds can support development of new Action Plans, supplemental planning activities such as developing a speed management plan or lighting plan, and demonstration activities such as feasibility studies using quick-build activities."

"In the previous funding round, the vast majority of eligible Planning and Demonstration Grant applicants received grant awards," said Broehm.

Action Plans and Demonstration Activities

For SS4A, comprehensive safety action plans are developed using a data-driven approach to identify roadway safety challenges and help agencies systematically prioritize safety projects and strategies to be implemented over time, tracking progress along the way.

SS4A funding is helping communities address roadway safety through a comprehensive Safe System Approach that uses several complementary types of interventions aligned with the objectives in USDOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy: safer people, safer roads, safer vehicles, safer speeds, and post-crash care.

Examples include Belgrade, MT, which is developing a safety action plan and testing crosswalk visibility enhancements, and Gering, NE, which is creating a safe streets action plan and piloting the use of rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) on arterial pedestrian crossings. Crosswalk visibility enhancements and RRFBs were included in Every Day Counts (EDC) round 5 through the Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian (STEP) initiative. Deerfield Beach, FL, will use its grant to implement a temporary-build Road Diet, a strategy included in EDC round 3, by using pavement markings and tubular markers to create a median, center turn lane, and buffered bicycle lane.

In West Hartford, CT, the number of fatal and serious injury crashes has more than doubled over the past 4 years, so the town pursued SS4A funding to pilot a speed safety camera (SSC) program as part of its Vision Zero initiative. West Hartford will use its award to install fixed SSCs at 15 locations. When deployed as fixed units, SSCs can reduce crashes on urban principal arterials up to 54 percent.

The town of Colonie, NY, received an SS4A grant to support a technology-driven safety initiative focused on crash prevention and post-crash care. Colonie's emergency medical services (EMS) department partnered with police and neighboring EMS agencies to pilot a system that alerts drivers to the presence of nearby emergency vehicles at crash scenes as well as a software platform that aids responders in treating crash victims.

Opportunities for Implementation

Communities are using the SS4A Implementation Grants to help fund safety projects and strategies they have identified as their most pressing safety problems.

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government in Kentucky is using SS4A funds to implement safety upgrades on the highest fatal and serious injury corridor identified in its Action Plan. In underserved communities on this corridor, many crashes occur due to the lack of safe multimodal transportation options. Planned upgrades include innovations promoted in past rounds of EDC such as restricted crossing U-turns and raised pedestrian crossing islands, as well as improved lighting, which is currently being promoted through EDC-7.

Jonesboro, AR, received implementation funding for projects in two roadway corridors to improve pedestrian and driver safety in underserved Census tracts. The first project includes adding crosswalk visibility enhancements and pedestrian hybrid beacons on a busy portion of four-lane highway where children account for much of the pedestrian activity. The second project will install LED streetlights along a 2.4-mile stretch of roadway that accounts for 11 percent of the city's nighttime pedestrian fatalities. The improved lighting is expected to benefit the safety of both pedestrians and drivers within the project limits.

Webster County, IA, will improve the safety of 32.5 miles of rural county roads that have been identified as high-risk locations for crashes and fatalities. The project aims to reduce the number and severity of the county's most prevalent crash type—improper lane departures—by implementing Proven Safety Countermeasures such as widening and paving shoulders and adding edge and center line rumble strips.

Access the full award lists of fiscal year 2022 and 2023 grants to learn how more agencies are using SS4A funds to improve safety for all road users.

Ride the Wave of SS4A

SS4A is continuing to advance many of the innovations promoted by the EDC program. Applications are now being accepted for the next round of SS4A funding. Agencies can visit the SS4A website for more information about the program, eligibility details, and tips on how to how to apply.

fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/innovator/issue101/page_03.html



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ANNOUNCES LATEST STEP TOWARD LAUNCHING NEW RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES INSTITUTE

CONTRACT AWARDED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR GRANTEES AND POTENTIAL GRANTEES UNDER THE RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES AND NEIGHBORHOODS (RCN) PROGRAM

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) today announced the award of a contract of up to \$27 million to Cadmus Group, Inc. to establish and administer the Reconnecting Communities Institute (RCI

or Institute). The RCI will be DOT's center for learning on restoring and reconnecting communities that have been harmed, isolated, and cut off from opportunity by past transportation choices. The Institute will assist communities in developing and delivering reconnection projects that better connect people to jobs, education, health care, and economic opportunities being created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, particularly the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program.

"The Biden-Harris administration is making unprecedented investments to help reconnect communities that were divided by past transportation decisions, with \$3.3 billion

awarded across the country just a few weeks ago," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "Now, with the new Reconnecting Communities Institute, we are providing communities tailored assistance to plan great locally-led transportation improvements, apply for funding, and deliver their projects."

The RCI will provide training and technical assistance to build organizational or community capacity in transportation planning and identify innovative strategies and solutions for reconnecting communities to jobs and economic opportunities that have previously been cut off by transportation infrastructure. The Cadmus Group brings a diverse team to RCI, with 13 partner organizations, including two national nonprofits and seven disadvantaged business enterprises. The team brings together urban planners, communications specialists, environmental justice experts, adult learning specialists, civil engineers, and subject matter experts who will be made available at no charge to participants. The Cadmus team includes seven disadvantaged business enterprises, comprising over 20 percent of the budget. The DBEs involved include minority-owned businesses, woman-owned businesses, and small businesses.

The Build America Bureau will manage the contractor in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration.

"With this contract award, our goal is to provide the training, technical assistance and resources needed to help communities apply for grant funding and ultimately deliver successful projects through the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program," said Federal Highway Administrator Shailen Bhatt. "With historic funding provided under the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, we have an opportunity to help communities invest in high quality transportation infrastructure that will improve quality of life and better connect residents for years to come."

"The Build America Bureau is pleased to play an integral role in the Reconnecting Communities Institute," said Build America Bureau Executive Director Morteza Farajian.

"This new program will be another tool in our growing technical assistance toolbox that will increase opportunities for communities that are seeking funding and low-cost financing options for projects that address harm from past infrastructure planning decisions, accelerate economic development, and improve access to everyday destinations."

Enrollment into the RCI will be open to States, local and tribal governments, metropolitan planning organizations, and nonprofit organizations. DOT will prioritize enrollment for entities serving economically disadvantaged communities, including rural and tribal communities. Many training programs and educational opportunities will be open to the public. Participants may include Reconnecting Community Pilot (RCP) program planning or capital construction grant recipients, prospective grant applicants, unsuccessful RCP program grant applicants and eligible entities otherwise interested in building organizational or community capacity in transportation planning to advance the restoration and reconnection of communities.

The RCI is expected to launch later this year. For additional information, please visit the Reconnecting Communities Institute webpage.

Last year, the Department awarded \$185 million to 45 communities as part of the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program, including six capital construction grants and 39 planning grants.

Just a few weeks ago, Secretary Pete Buttigieg announced \$3.33 billion in grant awards for 132 projects through the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program as part of President Biden's Investing in America Agenda. The funding is aimed at reconnecting communities that were cut off by transportation infrastructure decades ago, leaving entire neighborhoods without direct access to opportunity, like schools, jobs, medical offices, and places of worship.

DOT is committed to supporting projects that reconnect communities across its programs as part of its commitment to improving transportation equity and the Department's Equity Action Plan.

[transportation.gov/briefing-room/us-department-transportation-announces-latest-step-toward-launching-new-reconnecting](https://www.transportation.gov/briefing-room/us-department-transportation-announces-latest-step-toward-launching-new-reconnecting)

The power of advocacy: Strengthening public works for a better tomorrow

Evan Pratt Water Resources Commissioner Washtenaw County, Michigan
Member, APWA Government Affairs Committee

In the realm of public works, where infrastructure serves as the backbone of our communities, advocacy plays a crucial role in shaping policies, securing funding, and driving positive change.

As members of the American Public Works Association (APWA), we are not just stewards of infrastructure; we are advocates for the well-being and prosperity of our communities.

Advocacy is at the heart of APWA's mission to advance the public works profession and promote sustainable infrastructure solutions. As professionals dedicated to the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of public infrastructure, we possess invaluable expertise and insights that can inform neighbors, regulators, residents, and elected officials.

By actively engaging in advocacy efforts, we can ensure that the voices of public works professionals are heard and that our priorities are reflected in policy decisions. I have been delighted to hear local elected officials recently lead with the foundational importance of infrastructure in brief campaign speeches.

As we know, maintaining and modernizing our infrastructure is essential for economic growth, public safety, and quality of life. However, funding constraints

often pose significant challenges to the timely completion of critical infrastructure projects—especially for local needs that are just not a match for all of the recent state and federal infrastructure funding packages.

Advocacy plays a vital role in shaping policies that impact the public works profession. From transportation planning to water management to environmental sustainability, public works professionals are confronted with a myriad of complex challenges that require thoughtful and informed policymaking.

If advocacy is a scary word for you, just remember no one is better suited than you to tell people how your job benefits the community and its residents.

All of us have some ability to explain how investments and policies have affected or will affect real people in real communities.

By engaging with regulators, our local elected officials, lawmakers, and other stakeholders, APWA members like you have advocated for and will continue to advocate for policies that promote innovation, efficiency, and resilience in infrastructure development and management. Maybe you are in a role to do this yourself, or maybe you have an idea to share up the chain to promote an innovation or efficiency that has worked or could work in your community.

Furthermore, advocacy is essential for raising awareness about the importance of public works and the critical role that professionals in this field play in shaping the future of our communities. People need to know who we are and how we affect their lives.

By sharing success stories, best practices, and innovative solutions, APWA members can demonstrate the value of investing in infrastructure and highlight the positive impact that public works projects have on society. Through effective advocacy, we can inspire future generations of public works professionals and cultivate support for our profession.

As APWA members, there are several ways we can engage in advocacy efforts to support our profession and communities:

Build relationships: Establish relationships with regulators, community service organizations, community leaders, and appropriate elected officials. Foster open lines of communication and collaborate on advocacy initiatives to advance shared goals.

Educate and inform: Stay informed about key policy issues and legislative developments affecting public works. Educate policymakers and stakeholders about the

importance of investing in infrastructure and the expertise of public works professionals.

Participate in advocacy campaigns: Get involved in advocacy campaigns organized by APWA and other relevant organizations. It's easy for APWA: Text PWX to 52866 to sign up to receive critical Legislative Action Alerts via text message. You can simply click "Send" or modify the text of a letter to your legislators.

Share your expertise: Leverage your expertise and experience to contribute to policy discussions and decision-making processes. Serve on advisory boards, task forces, or committees related to community goals, planning, public works, or infrastructure.

In conclusion, advocacy is a powerful tool for APWA members to shape the future of public works and create positive change in our communities. You don't need to drive to the state capitol or Washington, DC, to be an effective advocate. Be yourself and Tell Your Story(ies) in your community. By actively engaging in advocacy efforts at any level, you can make a difference for your community and your team.

Evan Pratt can be reached at pratte@washtenaw.org.

apwa.partica.online/reporter/april-2024/regulars/the-power-of-advocacy-strengthening-public-works-for-a-better-tomorrow

Nurturing ETHICAL DUTY IN PUBLIC WORKS LEADERSHIP



In the realm of public works, ethics should serve as the rock-solid foundation for leadership. It's not a subject open for debate; rather, it is an implicit requirement that underpins our profession.

Public works professionals are intrinsically guided by ethical principles, which act as the moral compass directing them in their noble pursuits. However, in the face of an ever-changing landscape of politics and societal shifts, it is vital we reaffirm and reignite our commitment to these ethical values.

At the core of our ethical obligation lies the unwavering commitment of public works professionals to function as faithful stewards of taxpayers' money. These multifaceted organizations are designed to foster thriving communities, with roots dating back over a century when they emerged to combat corruption in rapidly expanding urban areas. The inception of professional local government aimed to recognize the intricate nature of delivering public services and leaned on the expertise of administrators and department directors. These professionals undertake a lifelong commitment to honing their skills.

Today, we stand at a pivotal juncture in the development of emerging leaders within the field of public works. As we welcome a new generation of leaders, it is imperative we hold firm to the fundamental tenets of our profession,

placing ethics and adherence to rules and regulations at the forefront. This commitment should be seamlessly integrated into the fabric of our professional development curricula, a facet often overlooked in higher education institutions and most professional continuing education courses.

Ethics are not a mere afterthought in the realm of public works; they are the guiding principles that help us navigate the ever-evolving landscape of public service.

They are the bedrock upon which we establish trust and accountability with the taxpayers who entrust us with their hard-earned money. As custodians of public resources, our ethical responsibility goes beyond mere rhetoric and superficial statements. It should be evident in our daily actions, decisions, and interactions.

Public works professionals occupy a unique position, straddling the boundary between politics and service. While we may not be elected officials, our role in shaping our communities and safeguarding public assets is of paramount importance. To fulfill this role ethically, we must remain dedicated to transparency, fairness, and the responsible allocation of resources. It's not enough to merely fulfill our responsibilities; we must also lead by example, consistently showcasing the ethical principles that form the foundation of our decisions and profession.

In an era where trust in institutions is frequently put to the test, maintaining our ethical duty is of even greater significance. Scandals, controversies, and ethical breaches in public service can erode the public's confidence in the institutions intended to serve them. Public works professionals must stand at the forefront of ethical conduct, ensuring our actions inspire trust and reflect accountability.

As we usher in a new generation of leaders, prioritizing ethics in the development of our workforce is essential. Ethical education should be seamlessly integrated into the curricula of higher education institutions that prepare the next wave of public works professionals. Moreover, continuing education courses for established professionals should incorporate ethical discussions, scenarios, and best practices to equip individuals with the tools needed to navigate complex ethical dilemmas.

To achieve this, institutions of higher learning and professional development organizations must acknowledge the pivotal role of ethics in our field.

They should actively seek out experts in ethics and public service to guide the development of programs that equip our professionals with the moral and intellectual tools they require.

The only time I delved into the realm of ethics during my college years was during one session within a contracts course.

But that fleeting encounter left me eager to learn more, leading me to enroll in two additional courses: one focused on ethics and the other on logic. While my peers were racing to graduate, seemingly disinterested in any coursework beyond the essentials, I pursued my curiosity. It's a decision I'll forever be grateful for, as those courses have since become the foundation of my ethical compass.

However, the rewards of my choice extend far beyond mere academic enhancement. I forged a profound and lasting friendship with my esteemed ethics professor, one that has proved invaluable throughout my career. He not only imparted wisdom but also became an unwavering mentor, guiding me through the labyrinth of ethical issues throughout my professional journey.

Today, we stand at a pivotal juncture in the development of emerging leaders within the field of public works.

Ethical leadership in public works is not a one-size-fits-all approach. The challenges we face are often multifaceted, necessitating nuanced ethical solutions. Therefore, our educational programs should not only instill ethical principles but also nurture critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills.

Our professionals should be capable of evaluating situations, considering ethical implications, and acting in a manner that upholds the values of our field.

In the ever-evolving landscape of public service, public works professionals must be agile and adaptable in their approach to ethical leadership. The challenges we encounter will change, but our commitment to ethical conduct should remain unwavering. Ethical leaders are not only guided by a set of principles; they are willing to engage in ongoing selfreflection and self-improvement.

Public works professionals must acknowledge that ethical leadership is not an endpoint but a continuous journey. It requires an enduring commitment to personal growth, an understanding of the evolving needs of our communities, and a readiness to adapt to new ethical challenges. Through this ongoing process, we can fulfill our ethical duty to the public we serve.

As public works professionals, we bear a profound ethical responsibility to our communities, our institutions, and ourselves. We are entrusted with the critical task of stewarding taxpayers' money and ensuring the prosperity of our communities. To fulfill this duty, we must actively promote ethical education, integrate ethical principles into our daily practices, and remain vigilant in upholding the values of our profession. Only by doing so can we safeguard the public's trust and continue to be effective leaders in public works.

By: Farhad Moghimi, PE Executive Director Pima Association of Governments and Regional Transportation Authority Member, APWA Governments Affairs Committee

Farhad Moghimi is a member of the APWA Government Affairs Committee. He is a registered professional engineer serving as the Executive Director of the Pima Association of Governments and the Regional Transportation Authority in Arizona. Farhad can be reached at fmoghimi@pagregion.com.

apwa.partica.online/reporter/december-2023/columns/nurturing-ethical-duty-in-public-works-leadership

HOW MAINTENANCE EFFORTS CONTRIBUTE TO ROADWAY SAFETY

Every year nearly 12,000 people die when their vehicle leaves their lane on a rural road, according to the Federal Highway Administration. In a previous newsletter, I discussed Federal Highway's Focus on Reducing Rural Roadway Departures (FoRRRwD) and how the proven countermeasures fit into three categories: 1) keeping the vehicle in their lane, 2) reducing the potential for crashes, and 3) reducing the severity of the crash if it does occur.

Many local agencies are stretched thin and don't have the staffing or the time to begin entirely new programs. However, prioritizing roadway safety does not have to increase your agency's costs or take too much additional time. Local maintenance employees are "boots on the ground" staff driving and working on your roads more than anyone else. Teaching them the things to look for and encouraging them to report safety issues are great low-cost ways to improve road safety.

Some issues maintenance crews can look for include:

- Damaged or missing signs
- Hidden signs due to vegetation
- Poor retroreflectivity of signs and striping
- Rutting of gravel roads
- Locations where water has crossed the road and damaged the road or roadway edge
- Any other pavement edge drop-off
- Blocked drainage ways
- Poor sight distance at curves and intersections

Many of these items fit into the first category of proven counter measures – keeping vehicles in their lane. Making sure that signing and striping is visible and obvious helps all road users know what to expect on the roadway, especially those that may not be familiar with driving in that area. Blocked drainage ways can allow ponding on the roads, triggering hydroplaning or icing in the colder months. It could also lead to erosion in unexpected areas, causing issues in side-slopes or pavement edge drop off. Although pavement edge drop off may seem like a smaller issue, many people solve the tire drop off by over correcting, which leads to head-on crashes or hitting a fixed object on the other side of the road. Finally, checking sight distance should be completed at various times of the year to reduce the potential of crashes. Changes in roadside vegetation, tree growth and even corn stalks can drastically change sight distance at intersections or curves.

These are just a few of the many ways your maintenance crews can assist your agency in roadway safety. Please reach out to me if you'd like more information on this or other safety topics. I can send additional materials. I'm also available to provide in-person or online training free of charge.

Lauren Gehner, PE (*Missouri Safety Circuit Rider*)
Email: Lauren@GehnerDandS.com
Phone: 314.624.0474

Sources: highways.dot.gov/safety/other/safety-and-roadway-maintenance-link

Please visit our website for other training courses:

MOLTAP.ORG

Level I, II and III (Super Scholar)

\$45/person

All classes 4 hours unless noted otherwise

For non-government or for-profit organizations, call 1.866.MORoads for rates

Attendance Policy

The Missouri LTAP staff would like to remind all agencies registering for classes that it is important to sign-up before the registration deadline to allow us time to plan for course materials, refreshments, etc. It is equally important that you let us know at least 48 hours before the class if some of your employees will not be attending. Please note that you will be charged for any no-shows; therefore, it is very important that you let us know at least 48 hours before. This policy was approved by our Missouri LTAP Advisory Board and ensures that we have an accurate count for class attendance. Thank you and we look forward to meeting your training needs.

Need training but don't have the budget to pay for travel expenses?

We can train your employees on location for a minimum of 20 people. You can invite other interested agencies in your area if necessary to meet the minimum. Call and discuss your training needs with our staff.

CONTACT US TO FIND OUT MORE!

**T: 866.MO ROADS
(667-6237)**
E: moltap@mst.edu

MO-LTAP SCHOLARS PROGRAM

A Training & Recognition Program



About The Program

The primary purpose of the MO-LTAP Scholars Program is to recognize skilled transportation and public works personnel in local agencies throughout Missouri. The program is intended to enhance the skills of all those involved in the maintenance, delivery, and management of local transportation and infrastructure. Training is aimed at increasing each participant's technical, maintenance, administrative, and supervisory skills depending on the program level. Electives can be selected to meet the individual's area of responsibility. Special emphasis will be given to safety in the workplace as well as in the field and in the development of a local transportation system. The program will allow participants to attain three levels of achievements: Level I, Level II, and Level III Super Scholar. Participants must complete the requirements for Level I before completing Level II.

Getting Started

Registration is available on the Missouri LTAP website (www.moltap.org). There is no registration fee for the program, but there is a fee for each class, which varies for each level. Classes are offered on an ongoing basis at various locations throughout the state. Contact Missouri LTAP for classes in your area or view the online training calendar.

Recognition

Certificates will be awarded by the Missouri LTAP Director to those individuals who successfully complete the requirements of the program during award ceremonies held at various conferences throughout the state and/or at a ceremony held at the graduate's place of employment.

LTAP TRAINING RESOURCES

FHWA Essentials for Local Public Agencies

Federal-aid Essentials for Local Public Agencies is a transportation resource designed to help local agency professionals navigate the Federal-aid Highway Program. Federal-aid Essentials is structured for busy agency staff who want further understanding of Federal-aid policies, procedures, and practices.

fhwa.dot.gov/federal-aidessentials/indexofvideos.cfm

Missouri Local Public Agency Program

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and MoDOT offers a free 4-hour training class designed to meet the recently implemented requirements for a Full Time Sponsor Employee to serve the role as the Person In Responsible Charge in order to receive Federal-aid funding for Locally Administered Projects. Local public agencies and consultants will be required to have taken this basic training course.

design.modot.mo.gov/lpatraining/

APWA – Professional Development

APWA offers online, face-to-face, and on-demand programs, with educational content that fits within your time and travel constraints. The Donald C. Stone Center provides professional development opportunities for the next generation of public works leadership.

apwa.net/learn

NHI – Training Resources

National Highway Institute, NHI, is the training and education arm of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) with its rich history of innovation and expertise in delivering transportation training.

nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/home.aspx

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Missouri LTAP | @Missouri LTAP

**WE'VE BEEN BUSY
NEW WEBSITE
COMING
SOON**

UPCOMING EVENTS

RURAL ROAD SAFETY WEEK 2024
July 15-19, 2024 (third week)

MML ANNUAL CONFERENCE
September 15-16, 2024
Branson, MO

MINK LOCAL ROADS MEETING 2024
September 24-25, 2024
St. Joseph, MO

MACCTO ANNUAL CONFERENCE
October 8-9, 2024
Branson, MO

APWA MISSOURI FALL CONFERENCE
October 23-25, 2024
Springfield, MO

MAC ANNUAL CONFERENCE
November 24-26, 2024
Lake Ozark, MO

ASPHALT CONFERENCE
Tentatively scheduled December 3-4, 2024

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For information about the program,
visit: oa.mo.gov/purch/surplus.html

Eligibility requirements can be found under
"Read about the Program"

REALTY FOR SALE

The Missouri Department of Transportation is responsible for managing realty assets owned by the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. Realty assets are periodically reviewed to determine if they are essential to current operations, or are expected to be in the near future. When realty assets are no longer essential to operations, they may be made available for sale to the public.

VISIT:
[www6.modot.mo.gov/
PropertyForSale](http://www6.modot.mo.gov/PropertyForSale)



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**NO EQUIPMENT FOR SALE
AT THIS TIME**