

Overview of the **Transportation Systems Institute (TSI)**

June 30, 2012

The TRC partnered with Vermont Technical College Technology Extension Division (VTC TED) to successfully implement the Transportation Systems Institute. This program was created to address the needs of incumbent state transportation workers within Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

A *needs assessment* was conducted of VT, NH & ME Departments of Transportation consisting of 41 structured interviews with DOT officials conducted by an evaluation specialist contracted for by the VTC TED. In response to the key research question, "What do you think is the biggest

- 70% participants agreed that the Institute provided an increase in their skill level.
- 50% of participants agreed that the Institute changed their understanding of diversity.
- More than half (56%) of the participants confirmed that the Institute made them realize there is a need for additional training in the workplace.
- 100% of participants agreed they would recommend this program to other colleagues.

Based on participant feedback, some curriculum modifications were made and a new cohort was chosen (12) to participate in the program in 2011.

Participants came from diverse backgrounds and positions:

Contracts Engineer	Municipal Highways Engineer,	Quality Assurance & Technical
Superintendent of Highway	Bureau of Planning & Community	Development Engineer
Operations	Assistance	District Transportation Administrator
Transportation Planning Analyst	Right of Way Engineer	IT Manager
Policy Development Specialist	District Engineer	Structures Design Engineer
Assistant Bridge Maintenance	Assistant Traffic Engineer - Bureau of	Right of Way
Engineer	Traffic	Local Transportation Facilities
Public Service Manager - Civil	Program Specialist	Program
Engineer IV	District Construction Engineer	Administrative Services
Human Resources	Chief of Final Design	Maintenance Transportation
Civil Rights Office	Financial Analyst	Administrator
	Civil Engineer IV	Highway Safety & Design

At the conclusion of the second cohort training the two cohorts were brought together for three-day programs (June 2011, November 2011 and May 2012). The purpose of these sessions and the coaching that transpired between the sessions was to work with the participants on projects and efforts to convert the learning from the TSI into actionable work and effort within their home agencies while maintaining a tri-state learning community.

In the spring of 2012, VTC TED piloted a modified curriculum for eleven municipal leaders and planners in transportation, with design assistance from TSI participants. In a three-day session in March and a follow up session in May the participants look at strategies for state and local agencies to work more collaboratively together to:

1. Address permitting processes
2. Streamlining funded projects, fed - state - local
3. Share common messages and vision
4. Involve federal people and DOTs in a system discussion
5. Getting town, state and FHWA together to change and streamline processes with federal programs
6. Improve and speed up the hiring and review of engineering services

Tropical Storm Irene was used as a case study to provide context for the discussion. For the state DOT TSI cohort members this was an opportunity to explore how to work more productively with their municipal level counterparts.

A review of the value of the TSI for participants was captured in a video presentation by VTC TED that was presented as a showcase at the Nawca 2012 reW*nbTeveltionabl mem 0 61-(b)4udy to provide conte