Transit Asset Management plan development is a process that state DOTs and public transportation providers have been focused on for the past two years. Over this time, state DOTs have been inventorying, assessing conditions of, and prioritizing investments in their transit rolling stock, facilities and equipment, as required by July 2016 final federal TAM rule.

As of October 1, 2018, initial TAM plans are complete, but not without a significant commitment of time and resources from state DOT transit offices. While adhering to federal TAM regulations, these plans will ensure that state DOT transit assets (and those of its sub-recipients) remain in a “state of good repair.” This process, however, is not perfect and understanding what worked, what did not and what lessons have been learned is critical to its future success.

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, New Mexico DOT, and Idaho Transportation Department (members of MTAP) reflect on these issues:
included in our inventory. To help in this process, DRPT utilized AECOM to perform the facility reviews, collect and analyze the data, and report back its findings.

In terms of lessons learned, DRPT understands that it needs a good process for the future TAM plans. As a result, the agency will launch the Making Efficient + Responsible Investments in Transit or MERIT process with the opening of the FY2020 grant cycle on December 3. This new process will integrate TAM into our prioritization and programming efforts going forward.

The plan, signed off by all of the Accountable Executives on or before September 1, 2018, is posted and can be reviewed on DRPT’s webpage.

New Mexico DOT
On September 28, 2018, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) published its 2019-2022 Statewide Group Tier II Transit Asset Management Plan covering 21 recipients of Section 5311 funding in the state. The TAM Plan is available here and projects future replacement and expenditure needs for an inventory including 343 vehicles, 11 facilities, and one piece of equipment valued at more than $50,000.

Overall, the TAM planning process was a valuable effort. New Mexico DOT was able to compare the vehicle and facility needs in the TAM Plan with our actual capital awards for FY2019. The agency found that its current application process works well to address transit capital needs, such as replacing vehicle and facilities that have exceeded their useful life benchmarks. The agency already programmed funding for one of the facilities in need of investment. The TAM planning effort also ensured that potential budgeting disasters, like replacing an unusually large number of vehicles, could be minimized in the future.

TAM planning, however, was not without its challenges. The asset inventory management software module we hoped to use was not ready. While useful life benchmarks are good indicators for replacing vehicles, other factors may determine when the vehicle actually can be replaced, such as local matching fund availability. At the state level, New Mexico DOT needs to review and monitor local preventative maintenance efforts, ensuring that each of our subrecipients has the fleet it needs to deliver its service safely and effectively.

In terms of lessons learned, they range from immediate to larger insights about policy and operations. The agency can improve how it assesses the condition of facilities and establish a more regular schedule for subrecipients to update their vehicle inventories. Nevertheless, New Mexico DOT’s TAM Plan is now a useful tool for prioritizing the allocation of capital funds and for evaluating how effectively those funds are deployed.

Idaho Transportation Department
Overall Idaho Transportation Department, Public Transportation (ITD-PT) Office’s TAM planning experience was a success and served as a great opportunity for the agency to reconnect with some of its smaller transit agencies. For a variety of reasons, including Idaho being a rural state, the nature of its public transportation system (all transit providers must be open to the public, including those serving senior centers), and the minimal staff available at its providers, ITD decided to develop a group TAM plan. ITD-PT’s TAM plan, however, had to be comprehensive enough to meet all the rule requirements, but simple enough that it wouldn’t add a significant workload on our providers.

In terms of its success, the greatest success in TAM plan development was the enriched relationship building with Idaho’s transit providers. ITD demonstrated its ability to better support these providers without putting more restrictions on them. ITD’s plan allows transit providers to follow their own policies and procedures while confirming that ITD-PT will do the same. ITD-PT staff met individually with its providers, confirming inventory reports and asset assessments matched the ITD-PT’s existing reports further improving relationships among agencies. More importantly, this process helped identify upcoming asset needs and challenges.

Facilities condition assessments were one of the top challenges, largely due to the qualifications needed to conduct a thorough facility review. For future facility assessments during the TAM Plan update, ITD-PT will rely on better tools to conduct a more thorough facilities condition assessment. The biggest challenge, however, was the inclusion of non-revenue support vehicles in the TAM plan equipment section. These older vehicles are rarely used, have minimal wear and lower mileage. However, their overall rating is “Poor” with 65% meeting or exceeding their useful life benchmark. Due to limited resources, our emphasis remains to improving rolling stock ratings. Establishing a less aggressive goal for the non-revenue vehicles replacement while ensuring safety remains a top priority.

In the future, ITD-PT will be meeting individually with its providers to establish their support and commitment for the four-year update, as we know it is more beneficial to keep them regularly informed of the requirements to allow for more time for questions, and to develop stronger, more collaborative relationships. Lastly, ITD-PT will look to utilize more training and tools when conducting inspections, especially on Idaho facilities.
AASHTO, APTA and CTAA members share a common bond in the world of public transportation. That bond is over federal transit programs that are implemented by states and local transit agencies. That is one major reason why we join forces in our work on Capitol Hill, with FTA and at conferences. The 2018 State Public Transportation Partnerships Conference is the culmination of our extensive work together. Once again, the summer partnerships conference was a huge success with many thanks to APTA for its coordination and to CTAA and FTA for its participation.

Since the 2018 Winter-Spring newsletter, MTAP continues its extensive and extraordinary accomplishments on behalf of state DOT transit offices. In May, MTAP held a webinar with leading experts to discuss the brokerage model and other success stories related to NEMT. In June, we held our State DOT Roundtable at the CTAA Expo. Most significant, however, has been MTAP’s work since the July release of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule. In addition to our quick preliminary analysis, MTAP worked with FTA to promote a webinar series to educate members about the final rule. On PTASP, MTAP will continue to hold forums until members understand and feel comfortable implementing the final rule and FTA’s goals for safety.

Back in March, MTAP held a workshop/webinar on Transit Asset Management, led by NMDOT Transit Bureau Chief Kevin Olinger. Kevin moderated a discussion with Caltrans, Iowa DOT and South Carolina DOT, each providing updates on TAM plan development. Additionally, members could “Ask the Expert” and seek help from FTA’s Mshadoni Smith about anything related to TAM. Overall, this webinar was part of the MTAP’s TAM technical assistance series and designed to assist state DOT transit offices meet the final TAM plan deadline on October 1, 2018. I hope the TAM plan deadline was met without too much trouble. Additionally, do not forget to provide FTA feedback on your TAM plan development during the roundtable discussion at 2018 Winter Meeting (in Chicago, Illinois) on Friday, November 9th.

Going forward, AASHTO is starting its policy work on the reauthorization of the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. The Council on Public Transportation and MTAP initiated a policy discussion at the State DOT Roundtable during the business meeting and most recently hosted a conference call among members to vet a series of transit principles. Sixteen members participated on the call. Staff will continue to work on the reauthorization principles document and host conference calls and meetings about it. Another in-person meeting to discuss our principles for FAST Act Reauthorization will be held during a pre-meeting session on November 7, just prior to the Winter Meeting in Chicago, Illinois. Staff must produce a white paper in February for the AASHTO Washington Briefing.

Lastly, MTAP and its members serve as a resource for state DOT transit offices around the country. MTAP provides members with an opportunity to poll members on policy or program questions or make announcements using its alert system. MTAP Alerts can put a question and/or information directly before the MTAP and the Council on Public Transportation members and in a matter of days help answer critical questions. Don’t hesitate to ask Richard or me for assistance with an MTAP Alert.

Thanks again for your dedication to MTAP and the Council on Public Transportation. We are best at advancing transit programs, education and public policy when we work and learn together.

See you in Chicago

– David Harris
New Mexico DOT
Director, Transit and Rail Division
MTAP Chair
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The Commonwealth of Virginia is thinking differently (and critically) about the allocation of statewide resources for transportation projects. This new critical thinking focuses more on person-throughput and less on specific modes of transportation. Thankfully, Virginia’s transit agencies are winning out with this new process and as a result of gaining access to new and innovative funding sources. The most significant changes involve the development of the SMART SCALE project prioritization process and the use of toll revenues for transit.

Virginia’s SMART SCALE process is all about picking the right transportation projects for funding and ensuring the best use of limited tax dollars. The process strengthens the bond between planning and programming of resources, by linking project eligibility to VTrans, the Commonwealth’s long-range multimodal transportation plan. The funding associated with the program is state and federal transportation funds that had previously been utilized for highway capacity expansion projects.

Through this SMART SCALE process, projects are scored based on an objective, outcome-based process that is transparent to the public. Under this new program, transit projects have been very competitive, resulting in significant new revenues to support transit capital expansion projects. In the first round of prioritization, eight projects received a total of $31 million. In the second round, seventeen projects received a total of $168 million. The projects receiving funding include new transit service in rural communities, a downtown circulator service in a small urban area, and a major commuter rail capacity expansion in Northern Virginia.

Virginia also is investing in multimodal solutions in congested urban corridors. The Commonwealth is using a significant amount of its toll revenues for multimodal solutions to increase person throughput and provide improved travel choices to system users.

Through the Transform 66 program, toll revenues are dedicated to improve and expand transit and deploy transportation demand management efforts to reduce congestion inside the Beltway.

Outside of the Beltway, funds from a public-private concession agreement have resulted in more than $100M in commuter rail enhancements and a commitment of $800M over the next 50 years to support enhanced transit services. Inside the Beltway, the Commonwealth is partnering with the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission to fund a Commuter Choice program. This program will invest approximately $10M annually in transit, TDM, bicycle, pedestrian, and operational improvements to improve person throughput. Finally, on I-95/395 a minimum of $15M annually has been dedicated to fund new and improved travel choices for a period of 66 years. These investments are ensuring that commuters have options and that these critical interstate facilities are moving as many people as possible.

In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly passed major transit legislation that dedicated an additional $154M annually to support WMATA and the Washington DC area Metro system. The same legislation outlined a slate of reform measures for the statewide transit program, in an effort to increase accountability and link funding to efficiency and performance.

Beginning in FY2020, Virginia’s transit capital funding will be prioritized based upon a quantitative process. State of good repair projects will be prioritized using a transit asset management methodology, while capital expansion projects will be prioritized in a manner similar to SMART SCALE. Transit operating assistance will move from a formula where about 1/3 of the allocation is based on performance metrics to an allocation formula solely based on performance metrics in FY2020. Finally, urban agencies will be subject to new strategic planning requirements focused on increasing efficiency and service.

While Virginia is successful in identifying innovative sources of revenue for transit projects, we still have transit funding challenges. The Commonwealth faces a long-term fiscal cliff looming as a bond issuance sunsets. These new sources of revenue may delay the onset of the fiscal cliff but this problem cannot be ignored. In the meantime, these new revenues help the Commonwealth support capacity expansion and will ultimately lead to increased state of good repair needs in the future.
State DOTs Role in PTASP Final Rule Implementation

Since the Federal Transit Administration publication of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule in July 2018, state DOTs still have questions about their responsibilities under the new rule. The questions reflect a proactive approach to implementing PTASP requirements and a commitment to strengthening transit safety.

The rule applies to transit operators who are recipients or sub-recipients of FTA Urbanized Area Formula Funds (Section 5307) and all rail transit operators that are FTA grantees. It requires the development and implementation of agency safety plans to better manage safety risk. These plans must include the processes and procedures necessary for implementing a Safety Management System (SMS), a proactive and comprehensive approach to managing safety.

Under the PTASP rule, states must draft and certify agency safety plans on behalf of small public transportation providers in their state by July 20, 2020. Small public transportation providers are recipients or sub-recipients of section 5307 funds that (1) operate 100 or fewer vehicles in peak revenue service across all fixed route modes or any one non-fixed route mode service and (2) do not operate a rail fixed transit system. States will certify these PTASP compliant agency safety plans through FTA’s annual certifications and assurances process.

The FTA is deferring applicability of the PTASP rule for operators that only receive financial assistance under the Formula Grants for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities program (Section 5310) or Formula Grants for Rural Areas program (Section 5311). These recipients total approximately 2,000 small and rural transit providers whose systems pose fewer safety risks than larger systems. The rule does not apply to passenger ferry service regulated by the United Stated Coast Guard or commuter rail service regulated by the Federal Railroad Administration.

Small transit providers can draft their own plans, but they must notify the state that they plan to do so in the manner as prescribed by the state. While a small transit provider may choose to draft its agency safety plan, the state cannot require them to do so. All transit agencies, regardless of who develops the plan, must implement their own safety plan.

To assist with the development of agency safety plans, FTA has available a safety plan template for bus transit and an accompanying reference guide. Ultimately, it is up to each state to decide the format it will use for drafting agency safety plans that meet the requirements of the PTASP rule. It also is up to each state to determine the number of plans it will draft. For example, a state may choose draft one plan for all its small transit providers or it may choose to develop multiple plans.

Several questions from state DOTs ask whether FTA funds may be used to draft and implement an agency safety plan. Activities related to developing and carrying out a safety plan may be eligible for financial assistance through various FTA grant programs, including the Urbanized Area Formula Grants program (Section 5307). State Safety Oversight Program formula funds may not be used to cover the costs of developing or carrying out transit agency safety plans. Please contact the FTA regional office for specific questions on grant eligibility.

FTA-hosted webinars are excellent sources of information about the PTASP final rule and an accompanying reference guide that is available on FTA’s website.

- PTASP FAQ Session
  Thursday, November 15
  2:00–3:00 p.m. ET
  This webinar will be a question and answer session about topics related to the PTASP final rule.

- Rail System Safety Program Plan (SSPP) to PTASP Roadmap
  Wednesday, December 5
  2:00–3:00 p.m. ET
  This webinar will provide a walkthrough of the SSPP to PTASP Roadmap guidance, available on FTA’s website.

Registration is required. All webinars include time for questions. Details and registration information can also be found on FTA’s PTASP web page.

FTA is committed to supporting states and the transit industry in implementing the PTASP final rule and helping make a safe industry even safer.

For any questions not answered through a webinar or one of FTA’s other PTASP resources, please email PTASP_QA@dot.gov.
Every year, members of AASHTO’s Multi-State Transit Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) gather for the Community Transportation of America’s (CTAA) Annual EXPO, for the State DOT Roundtable. The 2018 Expo, themed The Future of Mobility and located in the Steel City (Pittsburgh, PA), provides an excellent opportunity for professional insight and networking among our peers and colleagues.

The State DOT Roundtable is a three-hour concurrent session with discussions on federal, state and local transit topics and includes leaders from the Federal Transit Administration, CTAA and National RTAP. The agenda combines targeted presentations and a brief MTAP business meeting.

CTAA Executive Director Scott Bogren set the stage with a discussion about CTAA’s new strategic approach to communications and assisting and engaging its members. CTAA is focusing on making increased funding for buses an integral part of the national discussion on infrastructure legislation and promoting a legislative agenda that includes principles for Honoring the FAST Act provisions, Access to Health Care, Reconnecting Rural America, and Making Regulations Fit Transit Reality. Bogren pointed to tangible increases in bus and bus facility funds from FTA as illustrations of the key legislative changes CTAA is pushing for while also emphasizing the importance of engagement in regulatory reform discussions.

Next, the key members from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) program management team participated, including Henrika Buchanan, Kimberly Sledge and Marianne Stock (Office of Program Management). FTA’s Murat Omay from FTA’s Office of Research, Demonstration and Innovation also spoke. Updates/highlights from FTA include:

1. The Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility (CCAM) role and future direction - The CCAM coordinates federal agency efforts that fund transportation services for targeted populations and issues policy recommendations and implement activities that improve the availability, accessibility, and efficiency of community transportation services.

2. Research activities including: Mobility on Demand (MOD) focusing on an integrated multimodal network of safe, affordable and reliable transportation options; Mobility Services for All Americans (MSAA) focusing on increasing mobility options by overcoming technical barriers; Strategic Transit Research (STAR) that supports research that resolves barriers and also leverages market read technology; and Accessible Transportation Technologies Research Technologies Research Initiative (ATTRI), an exciting complete trip application that has multimodal integration options. All of these research programs/initiatives offer exciting opportunities to accelerate the application of technology to advance the transportation programs that we administer through our DOTs.

The National Rural Transit Assistance Program, led by Executive Director Robin Phillips, shared details about its New Transit Benefits Statistics Toolkit; updated Fundamental Financial Management Training; updated Transit Manager and ADA Toolkits; and the Transit Managers Facebook group. Pennsylvania DOT’s John Taylor and Colton Brown led the Discussion among the States portion of the agenda, highlighting its success with transit performance reviews and presented its human trafficking prevention efforts.

Finally, the State DOT Roundtable ended the meeting with the business segment, focusing on an initial discussion about public policy and FAST Reauthorization principles/issues, work plan updates and new research project selection process.

Overall, the 2018 State DOT Roundtable was a huge success and we look forward to an equally promising 2019.
Members of AASHTO, APTA and CTAA all converged on the great city of Minneapolis, Minnesota for the 2018 State Public Transportation Partnerships Conference. More than 100 transit professionals (transit agency leaders, administrators, managers, planners, advocates, etc.) from around the country gathered for 2 ½ days of informative sessions, networking opportunities and catching up with colleagues and friends. And a big thanks was extended to the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Minnesota Public Transit Association for co-hosting the conference.

Sessions covered a broad array of best practices, programs and policy areas in public transportation. Members heard from experts in the area of human services coordination, zero emission vehicles, connected and automated vehicles, marketing and communications, and much more. More details about the conference program are included on the MTAP website.

The conference kicked off with the Minnesota Host Forum on 21st Century Transportation and how Minnesota is in the middle of a mobility revolution. Minnesota DOT shared some of the results from its autonomous vehicle pilot initiative during the 2018 Super Bowl. One of the purposes of the AV pilot was to improve public acceptance of this technology.

And as it turns out, the Minnesota DOT pilot successfully moved the needle from 64% to 90% acceptance of this technology, showing that once people gain experience using CAVs, they become more comfortable.

Our federal agency partner, the Federal Transit Administration, usually hosts this conference in Washington, DC during odd-numbered years. This year, FTA sent its leadership and staff to speak in a variety of roles throughout the conference. FTA’s Executive Director Matt Welbes shared his personal stories about Minneapolis (having grown up in the Twin Cities area) and discussed important issues, including safety, transit’s $90 billion backlog to reach state of good repair, and the potential progress expected from CCAM this year (great news!!). FTA’s new Acting Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight Henrika Buchanan talked “transit shop,” specifically addressing the recently issued Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and the Safety Certification Training Program.

During the AASHTO breakout sessions on Day 2, FTA played a very prominent role. Acting Director for Program Oversight Scott Giering led a mini-workshop on the agency’s Comprehensive Review Guide for Triennial and State Management Reviews Fiscal Year 2018. Overall, the Office of Program Oversight has found that while total findings from SMRs are declining FTA is still issuing SMR findings to state DOTs with procurement, ADA and DBE being the top 3. Acting Director for System Safety Candace Key and Senior Program Analyst (Safety Policy Lead) Adrienne Malasky walked members through their new roles and responsibilities to comply with the PTASP final rule. Interesting, the PTASP final rule does not apply to 3000 rural transit systems, but state DOTs need to figure out how to work with smaller direct recipients in order to complete safety plans.

State departments of transportation made a significant contribution to the State Public Transportation Partnerships Conference, comprising a significant majority of the conference’s attendees. And State DOTs were involved in almost every session, either as moderators or panelists. Thanks to those members who participated in this year’s State Public Transportation Partnerships Conference.

To check out all the conference materials and presentations, visit the MTAP website. And stay tuned for more details about the upcoming 2019 State Public Transportation Partnerships Conference.
Using Passenger Facing Data for Transit Planning

General Transit Feed Specification or GTFS, originally developed by Google and TriMet to facilitate trip planning for transit customers in 2006, is the international data standard for providing transit service information to the public. The Oregon Department of Transportation Rail and Public Transit Division (RPTD) understands the importance of GTFS, starting its investment in the creation of GTFS feeds for transit agencies throughout the state in 2011. GTFS allows transit customers to more easily plan transit trips across the statewide fixed route network.

RPTD staff recognizes that GTFS data could also be used to help the division understand the statewide transit network in ways that were previously not practical. To implement this vision, RPTD collaborated with researchers at Oregon State University to develop an open source database and interactive mapping web application to track the network over time. In the summer of 2015, this effort resulted in the currently named, Transit Network Exploration Tool (TNExT), a program that provides a wide variety of data products for a statewide fixed-route network that contains 70 services. The code repository for the open source application is publicly available here.

In addition to tracking traditional operational metrics, such as service miles, service hours, and stop level service volume, TNExT can monitor the spatial and temporal connectivity of the statewide network. For instance, the tool’s Urban Areas report can identify communities served by transit. As of 2017, 95.5% of Oregon communities with a population of 2,500 or more were served by at least one transit stop. Planners also can use TNExT’s Connected Agencies report to improve the connectivity of the statewide network through stop realignment. The Key Transit Hubs Report, which served as an inspiration for the Connected Agencies work, clusters stops based on a user defined proximity parameter and generates a list of clusters that serve three or more transit services. This clusters list allows planners to track the distribution of these critical transfer nodes and the quality of service provided to these potential mobility hubs throughout the statewide network.

While TNExT is critical for allowing planners to track the impact of investments on the spatial connectivity of the statewide fixed route network, this tool also can track the temporal connectivity of the network, using the Timing Connections report. The Timing Connections report allows planners to analyze, on a trip-by-trip basis, the amount of time that users have to transfer from one transit service to each connecting service along the route. This report has been particularly important for analyzing connections between low frequency, long distance inter-city services, particularly when they connect to other modes like passenger rail, where missed transfers can result in substantial delays.

Beyond addressing the spatial and temporal connectivity of the statewide transit network, TNExT pairs GTFS data with census data, allowing planners to understand who has access to the fixed route transit network in Oregon. Planners also can understand the total number and percentage of jobs, employees, and low income, elderly, or individuals with disabilities who lack convenient access to transit stops or whose stops have a daily service volume that falls below a user specified threshold. These metrics allow planners to identify regions in the state where additional investment may be required to create an effective statewide network, or track the impact that those investments have on the users of the public transit system.

TNExT serves as the foundation of the upcoming Oregon Transit Network Study, and will be used to track the impact of additional state transit funding. To support the objectives of these initiatives, ODOT is investigating ways to integrate additional data sources into TNExT, including demand response service data using GTFS-flex data, and ridership information, using the GTFS-ride data standard. ODOT again is working in collaboration with Oregon State University.

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Improving program delivery is a priority of North Carolina DOT Secretary Jim Trogdon, who initiated an agency wide effort to streamline the project development process and reduce the time to get projects to design. The solution—use GIS data to evaluate projects on a regional scale.

Initially called “GIS Based Regional Modeling,” NCDOT soon renamed it Project ATLAS. ATLAS is an acronym for “Advancing Transportation through Linkages, Automation and Screening.” Evolving from an environmental screening process, Project ATLAS’s vision is to be a “One Stop Shop” for the agency’s project managers and consultant project managers to obtain project information and GIS-based data needed to assist in project delivery as rapidly as possible.

To ensure these project teams have the assistance they need for rapid project delivery, NCDOT has three tools as part of Project ATLAS currently under development. The first tool is the ATLAS Data Gateway and it will provide access to all currently available GIS data, identify and fill data gaps and produce new data layers where needed. The second tool is the ATLAS Screening Tool, which will provide an automated screening report for all transportation related projects, identifying site characteristics and potential effects to both the human and physical environment. The screening results will summarize the site features along with potential effects supported by accompanying spatial and tabular data. Finally, the third Project ATLAS product is the Project Management Platform. This platform will provide a unified workspace for project managers to explore projects for associated data, documents, screening results, and automated reports. Project ATLAS will give useful tools for executive management, such as the ability to display overall program or individual project status and Key Performance Indicators in aggregate.

Project ATLAS and its accompanying tools is a huge agency-wide success, resulting directly from the tremendous work of the ATLAS Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), which consisted of an NCDOT staff person, private consulting firm staff representing each business unit, and the NCDOT GIS Unit. The SMEs documented and compiled the multitude of existing business processes as well as the comprehensive list of data accompanying those processes. In addition, a high level documentation was constructed of the various enterprise systems and how they participate in current business processes. Project ATLAS proposes improvements to the current business processes, recommending moving as much data into the enterprise and promoting transparency between business units.

What is Transit’s Role?
The NCDOT Public Transportation Division is deeply involved in Project ATLAS, especially in the data identification and workflow process phases. Transit corridors and networks will be identified as part of the planning process for all highway and road projects using transit classifications and cross sections. From the start, transit projects will be integrated in the state’s highway and mobility network. As a result, we estimate that the agency’s Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) projects now cost about 1/3 of our current estimates. Project ATLAS allows the public transportation division to respond more quickly to growing congestion.

In terms of transit data provided to Project ATLAS, the sample includes: Google Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) for all fixed and deviated route services, Longitudinal Employment Household (LEHD) data, automated passenger count (APC) stop level data, InfoUSA Employment data, plus all of the traditional layers for medical and education services. Because of Project ATLAS, true multi-modal solutions will be the result. North Carolina DOT’s Public Transportation Division is excited about the future prospects of delivering better quality transit and transit projects around the state.
practices to: (1) increase rural transit ridership; (2) measuring the Return-on-Investment (ROI) of rural transit investment and (3) communicate the importance of rural transit investment.

**Task 75: Baseline Research on Allowable In-Kind and Local Match Sources** will result in a resource guide that describes how in-kind and local match sources have been successfully used.

**Task 76: Opportunities for State DOTs (and others) to encourage Shared Use Mobility Practices in Rural Areas** will generate information that can advance selected shared use mobility practices.

**Task 77: Lessons Learned and Impacts to Date of State DOT Implementation of New Federal Transit Asset Management and Public Transportation Agency Safety Requirements** will document state DOT’s implementation of the new TAM rule - and applicable Safety Plan guidance focusing on asset condition, safety performance and the investment of federal transit funds.

**B. Research Awarded—Soon To Begin**

The NCHRP 20-65 Project Panel selected five new research tasks for the FY 2018 program. Researchers have been selected from approved task order contractors. Work has been authorized for four of the five proposed tasks. All research should be underway by late 2018.

**Task 78, Impact of Decline in Volunteerism on Rural Transit Systems** will (1) research the decline in volunteers and (2) provide an assessment of the impact of this trend on the sustainability of transit operations that depend on volunteers.

**Task 79, Program Management Insights for the 5310 Program (Including Sub-Grantee Consolidation and Urban 5310)** will (a) survey states to determine the number sub-grantees per state, and (b) identify those states that have a well-structured program and limited number of 5310 sub-grantees.

**Task 80, Capacity Building Options for State Dot Transit Staff** will (a) identify generally applicable capacity building options and (b) identify strategies that will be of particular use to state DOT transit offices.

**Task 81, Effective Local and Statewide Approaches to Rural Service Assessment** will investigate effective local and statewide approaches to rural service assessment and (1) document, assess and determine lessons from the current
Illinois DOT Welcomes the Winter Meeting to Chicago

This year, Illinois DOT is hosting the Council on Public Transportation and MTAP Winter Meeting in Chicago at the Willis Tower (formerly known as the Sears Tower) November 7–9th. The agenda is shaping up to be very exciting with timely and exciting topics. Starting on November 7th, a legislative working group will hold a roundtable discussion on public policy and FAST Act Reauthorization, followed by a tour of the historic Chicago Union Station, a famous location for Hollywood films, including The Untouchables, My Best Friend’s Wedding, and Public Enemies, among others.

Jim Tymon, AASHTO, and David Harris, NMDOT will kick off the Winter Meeting on Thursday, November 8th with a welcome and opening remarks. Then we will transition into the day and half agenda. Most importantly, our federal agency partner, the Federal Transit Administration, will have a significant role and allow members to interact one-on-one with its leadership, including:

- **Acting Director of the Office of Program Oversight’s Scott Giering**—Scott will facilitate a discussion on the State Management Reviews and deficiencies.
- **Regional Administrator for FTA’s Region 5 Kelley Brookins**—Kelley will give the keynote at lunch on Day 1.
- **Office of Program Management’s Marianne Stock and Kimberly Sledge**—Marianne and Kim will provide a one-on-one discussion on FTA’s State Programs.
- **Acting Director for System Safety’s Candace Key and Senior Program Analyst Adrienne Malasky**—Candace and Adrienne will host a workshop on the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule.
- **Transit Asset Management’s Program Manager Mshadoni Smith**—Mshadoni will facilitate a roundtable discussion on TAM with US DOT Volpe Center’s Anna Biton and Emily Lawless.

The Winter Meeting agenda also provides members an opportunity to engage on a variety of topics, including:

- **Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) research**—Gail Bauhs and Linda Cherrington will discuss their work on the TCRP B-44 Research Panel on Report 202, titled Encouraging Better Coordination on NEMT.
- **Rural Transit and Shared-use Mobility**—A panel will provide an overview of rural shared-use mobility, discussing various mobility-on-demand projects and the realities of innovation from a rural local government’s perspective.
- **Preparing for FTA Drug and Alcohol Audits**—Robbie Sarles, RLS and Associates, and Don Chartock, Washington State DOT, will share tips for achieving compliance with 49 CFR Part 655 and Part 40.
- **Enabling Mobility Opportunities through Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Technology**—A panel will discuss the ways state DOTs can leverage and integrate Automated Vehicle Technology using real-world examples demonstrating the technology.

In addition, members will hear from Illinois Secretary of Transportation (and former executive director of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning) Randy Blankenhorn. The Transportation Research Board’s Velvet Basemera-Fitzpatrick will discuss NCHRP 20-65 research projects and the status of transit research going forward.

Check out the meeting webpage for the entire agenda. And don’t forget to attend the social and networking event on November 8th. This year, we will be gathering at Boston Blackies.

We are looking forward to another successful, informative and fun gathering of members of the Council on Public Transportation and MTAP.

See you in Chicago, and let’s hope for good weather.

– Carrie Cooper
Illinois DOT
Carrie.Cooper@illinois.gov
local and state levels practices; and (2) develop recommendations for State DOTs and individual rural transit agencies.

2017 Completed Research, Final Reports Available

**Task 68: Successful Mobility Management Practices for Improving Transportation Services in Small Urban and Rural Areas** documents the mobility management practices that are being effectively used in smaller transit agencies.

**Task 69: Consolidation of Rural Transit Systems** looks at formal and informal efforts that State DOTS are taking to encourage rural transit agencies to consolidate and provides a guidebook that can assist transit agencies that are considering consolidation.

**Task 72: Small System Alternative Fuel Strategies** provides a toolkit and guidance document that can be used by small bus operators to assess the impacts of deploying various alternative fuels.

MTAP Operating Procedures allows the Steering Committee Chair to “appoint a successor based on the results of the most recent MTAP Steering Committee election.”

Chuck Dyer serves as Administrator of the Office of Public Transportation for Ohio DOT. In his role, Chuck supports the office’s mission to advocate personal mobility by supporting, coordinating and funding public transportation. He has been with Ohio DOT for more than eight years.

While Chuck works for the office of public transportation, he only rides public transit to work twice a year. His goal is to dramatically improve on that effort. Chuck is a 2004 graduate from THE Ohio State University. He and his wife, Alicia Dyer, have three children, Thomas (15), Henry (9), and Oliver (7).

Please congratulate him with a personal message.