

SURTC is Part of Rural and Small Urban Livability Center

SURTC will be a partner in a new Small Urban and Rural Livability Center being established with a two-year \$2.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The grant was awarded as part of the University Transportation Centers (UTC) program.

The Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University will lead the effort to conduct research, education, and outreach activities on issues such as expanding public transportation options; creating safe routes for bicyclists and pedestrians; improving access to key regional transportation hubs and destinations; and integrating all available modes of transportation. SURTC brings to the effort expertise in transit, mobility's impact on access to vital services in rural communities and other rural livability factors. The center will receive \$1.1 million

over two years for its involvement in the project.

"When people think about livable communities, one of their top priorities is being able to get where they need to go without always having to use their car," said Steve Albert, director of the Western Transportation Institute. "Most of the livability initiatives up to now have focused on urban areas, so we are very excited and honored to take the lead on these issues for millions of Americans who live in small cities and rural areas."

The U.S. DOT Research and Innovative Technology Administration received more than 140 applications for UTC awards from universities and research consortiums across the country, and selected only 35 centers. "Only two Centers were chosen to

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Recent highlights from the SURTC Blog:

- Webinar on Engaging People with Disabilities and Older Adults in Coordinated Planning
- Participation at Louisiana Public Transit Conference
- SURTC is part of New Rural and Small Urban Livability Center
- Research Report—Effortless Passenger Identification System

Visit our blog at:
blog.surtc.org

Editors: Jeremy Mattson and Tom Jirik



www.surtc.org

SURTC Developing FTA 101 Web-Based Training Module

SURTC is developing a new web-based training module to educate newly hired public transportation staff about federal programs and grant management.

The training module, titled "FTA 101," is being developed for AASHTO's Multi-State Technical Assistance Program (MTAP). Keven Anderson, coordinator of training and outreach for SURTC, is leading the project and working closely with MTAP and AASHTO staff to develop the content and presentation of the module. Jill Hough, SURTC director, and Rachel Leigh, instructional design specialist with the

Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute, are also involved in the effort.



Keven Anderson

This module will train state DOT and public transportation staff to more effectively manage and distribute federal resources and comply with FTA requirements.

For more details about the web-based training module, contact Keven Anderson at keven.anderson@ndsu.edu.

Message from the Director

It is an exciting time at SURTC. We have entered into a new partnership and established agreements with new affiliated staff to assist with research and training. SURTC will be part of Montana State University's Small Urban and Rural Livability Center, which was awarded through the University Transportation Centers Program. In this, our final issue of the "Transit Lane," you will learn about our new partnership and meet our new affiliated staff. If you have not done so already, please sign up to receive our information electronically. In 2014, our information will be disseminated primarily through our blog posts and e-mail. We look forward to the new challenges and opportunities that will come with the new year and we want to keep you informed. As always, thank you for reading and for your continued support of SURTC.



Jill Hough

Livability Center

(FROM PAGE 1)

focus on livability issues, so we are very proud to represent interests and needs of rural residents," said Western Transportation Institute program manager David Kack, who will serve as the center's director.

"We look forward to our partnership with the Western Transportation Institute and continuing our work in regards to livability in rural and small urban areas," said Jill Hough, SURTC director. Hough will serve as the deputy director of the new center.

Webinar on Engaging People with Disabilities and Older Adults in Planning

Results from SURTC research on the use of technologies to improve public participation in transportation planning were presented as part of a Nov. 22 webinar that explored ways to engage people with disabilities and older adults in planning.

SURTC researcher Del Peterson presented the results and discussed the use of smart phones and tablets for conducting rider surveys, webcasts of public input meetings, online surveys, and social media. Other webinar participants discussed

how they apply evidence-based practices in the field.

The webinar was conducted as part of a project sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living and focused on the application of evidence-based practices to improve participation in coordinated planning.

A recording of the webinar and the webinar slide show are available at www.transitplanning4all.org.

Ted Rieck and Marc Scott to Contract with SURTC

SURTC has increased its capabilities and areas of expertise by adding Ted Rieck and Marc Scott as affiliated staff. Rieck and Scott, who have agreements to do contract work with SURTC, offer unique talents.

Rieck has more than 30 years of transit experience, including operations, planning, and consulting, with special proficiency in transit education. Most recently, he has been a management and planning consultant working with architecture and transportation engineering firms on assignments across the country including strategic planning, corporate



Ted Rieck

development, and management consulting.

Dr. Scott is a former graduate research assistant and research analyst with SURTC who completed his Ph.D. in Transportation & Logistics at North Dakota State University. Scott is also a former American Public Transportation Foundation scholarship recipient. He has conducted research on several transportation-related topics, including projects focused on transit operations and service planning, and he is currently working as a supply chain analyst with Walmart.



Marc Scott

SURTC Expands Education Offerings

SURTC is expanding its education offerings by developing a new graduate-level transit class.

Researchers Jeremy Mattson and Dr. Ranjit Godavarthy are developing the course as a follow-up to the graduate-level course being taught by Dr. Jill Hough. The new class will provide more in-depth information on some topics and cover more advanced areas including modeling, economics, and transportation engineering.

The existing course, TL 786, will next be offered in fall 2014, and the new class will be offered for the first time in spring 2015.

SURTC Staff Participate in Conferences Across the Country and Abroad

SURTC expertise is being tapped across the country and around the world as staff members participate in conferences, present research and training topics, and help plan upcoming conferences.

Keven Anderson, coordinator of training and outreach, and researcher Jeremy Mattson participated in the 2013 Louisiana Public Transit Conference in New Orleans, LA, Nov. 20-22.

Anderson conducted a session on succession planning and mentoring. Many of the transit managers currently in the industry are at or near retirement age, and most systems have no plans for future managers. In his presentation, Anderson discussed how to run your transit system as a business and how to grow your current employees through mentor programs to take on more responsibility.

Mattson gave a presentation on the use of alternative fuels and hybrid vehicles by small urban and rural transit systems. His presentation was based on a survey he conducted of small



Jeremy Mattson

urban and rural transit operators. This research examined the use of alternative fuels and hybrids, satisfaction with these alternatives, problems encountered, reasons for adoption, and deterrents, both perceived and real.

Dr. Jill Hough, SURTC director, presented at the 3rd International Conference on Urban Public Transportation Systems Nov. 18-20 in Paris, France. Her presentation was on "Best Practices in Operating Small Urban and Rural Transit Systems."

Hough also gave a presentation in early October at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Annual Meeting in Chicago. She presented "The Role of Research in Transit Operations" and also chaired the Higher Education Subcommittee meeting.

Mattson and Dr. Ranjit Godavarthy are participating in upcoming conferences. Mattson will participate in a poster session at the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, in January. His presentation is titled "Evaluating the State of Mobility Management and Human Service Transportation Coordination." This research evaluates the value and effectiveness of mobility management

and coordination programs in meeting the needs of riders.

Godavarthy will present results from an extensive cost-benefit analysis of rural and small urban transit at the Transportation Research Forum in San Jose, CA, in March.



Ranjit Godavarthy

SURTC staff are also involved in the planning for upcoming national conferences. Keven Anderson is serving on the planning committee for the CTAA EXPO 2014, to be held June 8-13 in St. Paul, MN.



Del Peterson

Del Peterson is serving on the planning committee for the 21st National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation. This conference will be held Oct. 26-29, 2014, in Monterey, CA. As part of this committee, he is taking a lead in conducting the student paper competition.

SURTC Continues Busy Training Schedule

In addition to participating in the Louisiana Public Transit Conference, Keven Anderson has provided training in various other sites this fall. In September, he traveled to Coeur d'Alene, ID, to present *Financial Management for Transit Operators* at the Community Transportation Association of Idaho (CTAI) Annual Fall Conference. At the Minnesota Transit Conference in October in St.



Al Abeson

Cloud, MN, he conducted training sessions on *Transit Cost Allocation* and *Strategic Planning*.

Anderson teamed with Dr. Al Abeson to conduct Title VI Training across the state of Texas in October and November. They presented the course

in Mesquite, Lubbock, Houston, and Corpus Christi. Also in November, Anderson and Dr. Jim Miller conducted the three-day *Principles of Transit Management* in Austin, TX.



Jim Miller

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As of January 2014, you'll have to be connected to be connected to SURTC. We are discontinuing our current newsletter and relying on our blog to provide timely information about our research, training, education, and events, as well as other SURTC news and important industry news and information.

If you're not already receiving this newsletter electronically, go to www.surtc.org and click on JOIN OUR E-MAIL LIST. By joining our email list, our blog articles will be sent directly to your email.

You can also read our articles at www.surtc.org or blog.surtc.org, and an RSS feed of our blog posts is also available.

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