

Montana LTAP Progress Report

By

Matthew Ulberg, PE

Director

Montana Local Technical Assistance Program

Western Transportation Institute

College of Engineering

Montana State University – Bozeman, MT

Quarterly Progress Report

MDT Project No. 02443

2nd Quarter, State Fiscal Year 2021

October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020

Prepared for the

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

in cooperation with the

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

January 25, 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Safety2
 Infrastructure Management.....3
 Workforce Development.....5
 Organizational Excellence6
 SFY 2020 Second Quarter Financial Summary 8

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Safety Area Budget Summary, 2nd Quarter SFY 2021..... 2
 Table 2: Infrastructure Management Budget Summary, 2nd Quarter SFY 2021 4
 Table 3: Workforce Development Budget Summary, 2nd Quarter SFY 2021 5
 Table 4: Organizational Excellence Budget Summary: 2nd Quarter SFY 2021 6
 Table 5: SFY 2nd Quarter Workshop Evaluation Summary 7
 Table 6: 2nd Quarter SFY 2021 Budget Summary, October 2020 - December 2020 8
 Table 7: Budget Summary by Focus Area, October 2020 - December 2020 8

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This State Fiscal Year (SFY) Second Quarterly Report is submitted to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide details on the activities and project work of Montana LTAP in support of MDT Project No. 02443, Montana Local Technical Assistance Program, during the period October 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

We have been quite busy with travel and a fair amount of training. Highlights of Montana LTAP's accomplishments during that period include the following:

- LTAP hosted three monthly safety webinars during the second quarter. Winter Safety/PPE/SAD, Holiday Safety, and Winter Work Zones were the topics covered.
- During October 2020, LTAP was unable to schedule MACRS Fall District Meetings due to COVID Travel restrictions and local COVID regulations, as well as the preference of the MACRS board.
- Trainings this quarter included: Work Zone Technician, Flagging, 1st aid/CPR, Fork Lift, Winter Maintenance and Safety, and MSHA Refreshers.
- The Regional Local Road Conference in Rapid City, South Dakota, was cancelled due to COVID.
- Flagger Certification and Work Zone Tech classes were delivered in Butte and Billings.
- The Annual MACRS Conference planning meetings are being held by the MACRS board of Directors. A decision on whether to hold the meeting in 2021 has not been made at this time.
- Winter Maintenance and Safety classes were conducted in Gardiner for the National Park Service.
- Our delivery to 130 in-class students included students from diverse backgrounds and employment. Below are our tracked statistics:
 - 37% City employees
 - 31% County employees
 - 9% NPS/Federal employees
 - 23% Contractors or individuals not listing employment (Highlands College)

This progress report is organized following the four LTAP focus areas:

1. Safety
2. Infrastructure Management
3. Workforce Development
4. Organizational Excellence

SAFETY

Past Activities

Proactive safety training initiatives for local governments are key objectives in this focus area. Technology transfer is accomplished through safety-related articles in LTAP’s newsletter, safety training seminars, staff responses to phone and email inquiries, and on-site technical assistance. In the projected LTAP budget, 48 percent of funding is allocated to the Safety focus area. Table 1 shows the safety focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 1: Safety Area Budget Summary, 2nd Quarter SFY 2021.

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	33,099.24	36,905.19	132,396.96	61,658.93
Prof. Services	943.44	-	3,773.76	-
Travel	600	1,084.93	2,400.00	1,050.89
Supplies/Comm.	820.2	680.67	3,280.80	747.79
Minor Equipment	-	19.18	-	19.18
Totals	35,462.88	38,689.97	141,851.52	63,476.78

Four safety related workshops were conducted during this three-month period. A total of 81 participants attended. The workshops included:

- Two Flagger Certification classes were conducted during the 2nd quarter. Topics included flagging duties and responsibilities, and safety, uniformity and liability issues. The classes were held in Butte at Highlands College.
- LTAP hosted three monthly safety webinars during the second quarter. Winter Safety PPE/SAD, Holiday Safety and Winter Work Zones were the topics covered. The webinar recordings can be accessed via the LTAP website link: <http://www.coe.montana.edu/ltapv2/resources/webinars/index.html>.
- During October 2020, two Work Zone Tech classes were held in Billings, MT with a total of 37 attendees.
- Winter Maintenance and Winter Safety classes were conducted in Gardiner, MT for the NPS Yellowstone Park Maintenance Crews. Topics covered included: snow and ice control, Plowing Operations, Winter maintenance issues and solutions; snow, ice control, and deicing; carbon monoxide, and hypothermia, and PPE.
- First Aid/CPR classes were taught in Missoula and Helena.

Challenges

- COVID-19 restrictions and the valid concerns of our customers regarding the safety of group classes remains the most significant challenge in delivering in-person content.

- Online content delivery is severely hindered by our customers regular course of business operations, minimal availability of computers within each shop area, and general dislike of online format of trainings.
- Scheduling any training dates in eastern Montana is a challenge during the winter months. Road conditions are a limiting factor, and Montana cities and counties are working hard to maintain the streets and highways during this time.
- Normal challenges: Time, distance and demand. We are making strides in addressing the greater need for training in eastern MT in multiple locations. Current training requested includes: Leadership is needed state-wide, Flagger Certification, Workzone Technician, and Traffic Control Supervisor Courses, Roadway Inventory management and snowplow training.

Planned Activities

- Flagger Certification workshops are being requested statewide.
- The 17th Annual Safety Congress is scheduled for January 25-28, 2021 in Helena. Topics will cover Work Zone Technician; Traffic Control Supervisor and the Flagger Certification Class Train the Trainer.
- LTAP webinars focused primarily on safety topics will continue in 2021 on a monthly schedule.

The LTAP newsletter contained the following articles related to Safety:

- Newsletter to be published in February.

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

Past Activities

Montana LTAP is promoting more attention on Infrastructure Management through partnerships with the Asphalt Institute, and through delivering relevant training and technical assistance. In the projected LTAP budget, 18 percent of funding is allocated to the infrastructure management focus area. Table 2 shows the infrastructure management focus area budget and costs-to-date.

LTAP held one in-person infrastructure management related workshop this quarter (NPS-Yellowstone National Park Crews). LTAP also provided technical assists to several roadway management partners including the following Infrastructure Management topics.

- During October 2020, LTAP worked with a Gallatin County local roads (private road maintenance) group to work through some gravel quality and subgrade support concerns, including repair methodologies, regular maintenance practices and gravel specifications.

- LTAP answered 8 requests for technical assistance regarding sign inventories, pavement condition assessments, PASER program ratings for paved and unpaved roads, and several separate guardrail installation and maintenance issues.
- LTAP provided another class to a large group from the National parks Service on Winter Maintenance and Operations.

Table 2: Infrastructure Management Budget Summary, 2nd Quarter SFY 2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	12,412.22	13,839.45	49,648.86	23,122.10
Prof. Services	353.79	-	1415.16	-
Travel	225.00	406.85	900.00	394.08
Supplies/Comm.	307.58	255.25	1230.30	280.42
Minor Equipment	-	7.20	-	7.20
Totals	13,298.58	14,508.74	53,194.32	23,803.80

The LTAP newsletter contained the following articles related to Safety:

- Newsletter to be published in February.

Challenges

- COVID-19 restrictions and the valid concerns of our customers regarding the safety of group classes remains the most significant challenge in delivering in-person content.
- Online content delivery is severely hindered by our customers regular course of business operations, minimal availability of computers within each shop area, and general dislike of online format of trainings.
- Scheduling any training dates in eastern Montana is a challenge during the winter months. Road conditions are a limiting factor, and Montana cities and counties are working hard to maintain the streets and highways during this time.
- Normal challenges: Time, distance and demand. We are making strides in addressing the greater need for training in eastern MT in multiple locations. Current training requested includes: Leadership is needed state-wide, Flagger Certification, Work Zone Technician, and Traffic Control Supervisor Courses, Roadway Inventory management and snowplow training.
- Several counties have requested a low-cost inventory management system to help them document and keep a basic Capital Improvement Plan in-place. Options are provided for inquiring counties, including North Dakota’s GRIT program.

Planned Activities

- LTAP plans to continue to offer in-house Motor Grader Operation training this spring/summer. This includes instruction on unpaved roadway management.
- LTAP plans also continue to offer guardrail, cattleguard, sign inventory and unpaved and paved roadway maintenance and management classes are throughout the year.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Past Activities

In the projected LTAP budget, 22 percent of funding is allocated to the workforce development focus area. Table 3 shows the workforce development focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Six workforce development related workshops were conducted during this three-month period. A total of 90 participants attended. The workshops included:

- LTAP provided 7 classes around the State on HazComm and Winter Maintenance and Operations, focusing on the skills, techniques and knowledge of the operators.
- Shawna Page delivered 2 MSHA Refreshers in October for Missoula County.

Table 2: Workforce Development Budget Summary, 2nd Quarter SFY 2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	15,170.49	16,914.88	60,681.94	28,260.34
Prof. Services	432.41	-	1,729.64	-
Travel	275.00	497.26	1,100.00	481.66
Supplies/Comm.	375.93	311.98	1,503.70	342.74
Minor Equipment	-	8.80	-	8.80
Totals	16,253.82	17,732.91	65,015.28	29,093.53

The LTAP newsletter contained the following articles related to Workforce Development:

- Newsletter to be published in February.

Planned Activities

- LTAP will continue to offer Motor Grader Operation in addition to our regular WFD offerings in 2020.
- COVID-19 and turnover issues continue to challenge local agencies. WFD is a big area of need for training. FHWA is including WFD in the EDC initiatives, and we expect this to be a big part of how LTAP helps bring Montana’s workforce into the transportation sectors.
- We continue to have more demand than ability to deliver program, and we hope that the FHWA new strategic plan for LTAP helps us focus on this area into the future.

- We are offering more classes focused on Workforce Development, including leadership and self-assessments that we hope to delivered at the MACRS pre-conference training in Great Falls, in March 2021.
- Newsletter to be published in February.

Challenges

- We are seeing a high demand for our Leadership. We will do our best to offer a good schedule of these this spring and summer.
- General training of all the basics continues to be in high demand due to turnover in many communities. We expect that trend to continue.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Past Activities

To provide the best service possible to constituents, LTAP personnel seek training to improve their outreach capabilities. Organizational excellence addresses professional development and leadership training for LTAP personnel. In the projected LTAP budget, 22 percent of funding is allocated to the organizational excellence focus area. Table 4 shows the organizational excellence focus area budget and costs-to-date.

Table 3: Organizational Excellence Budget Summary: 2nd Quarter SFY 2021

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	8,274.81	9,226.30	33,099.24	15,414.73
Prof. Services	235.86	-	943.44	-
Travel	150	271.22	600	262.71
Supplies/Comm.	205.05	170.17	820.2	186.95
Minor Equipment	-	4.80	-	4.80
Total	8,865.72	9,672.48	35,462.88	15,869.19

- LTAP has caught up with our Road Scholar program records, distributing notifications to all potential Road Scholar Candidates for 2021. We could have a very large class of graduates if training opportunities are able to be provided (COVID).
- LTAP Director Matt Ulberg participated in National NLTAPA Executive Board Meetings and Regional Meetings virtually this quarter.
- Director Matt Ulberg continues to serve as President-Elect for NLTAPA through July of 2021.

- Matt also serves as the planning chair for the NLTAPA National Meeting in Columbus, OH July of 2021.
- LTAP is helping MACRS prepare for the annual spring MACRS conference, if it is to be held, in Great Falls, MT.
- LTAP is working with the Asphalt Institute to plan a 2021 Asphalt Conference.

Table 5: SFY 2nd Quarter Workshop Evaluation Summary

No Surveys Collected this quarter.

Challenges

LTAP has caught up with our Road Scholar program records, distributing notifications to all potential Road Scholar Candidates for 2021.

We are still looking to find a way to finance a new Learning Management System (LMS) for continuation of the program.

Planned Activities

- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg has been elected to the National LTAP Association (NLTAPA) executive board and serves as the President-Elect until July 2021.
- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend the NLTAPA Executive Board and Winter Meeting of NLTAPA virtually, prior to TRB.
- Montana LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend the TRB Meetings virtually the end of January 2021.
- The 40th Annual MACRS may be held (NOT DECIDED) in Great Falls, MT.
- LTAP Director Matt Ulberg will attend the National NACE VIRTUAL Convention this summer. NACE is a key partner with LTAP nationally and within Montana. Montana's NACE affiliate is MACRS.
- Montana LTAP plans to distribute an updated LTAP Training Needs Assessment Survey to our constituents and training participants at annual MACRS conference in March/April 2021.
- Newsletter to be published in February.

SFY 2020 Second Quarter Financial Summary

Table 6: 2nd Quarter SFY 2021 Budget Summary, October 2020 - December 2020

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs-this-Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs-to-Date
Salaries/Benefits	68,956.75	76,885.81	275,827.00	128,456.10
Prof. Services	1,965.50	-	7,862.00	-
Travel	1,250.00	2,260.26	5,000.00	2,189.34
Supplies/Comm.	1,708.75	1,418.07	6,835.00	1,557.90
Minor Equipment	-	39.97	-	39.97
Total	73,881.00	80,604.10	295,524.00	132,243.30
IDC's	21,119.00	22,978.93	84,476.00	37,670.59
	95,000.00	103,583.03	380,000.00	169,913.89

Table 7: Budget Summary by Focus Area, October 2020 - December 2020

Focus Areas	Salary/ Benefits	Prof. Services	Travel	Supplies/ Com	Minor Equip	Subtotal	IDC's	Total
Safety - 48%	36,905.19	-	1,084.93	680.67	19.18	38,689.97	11,029.89	49,719.86
Infrastructure Management - 18%	13,839.45	-	406.85	255.25	7.20	14,508.74	4,136.21	18,644.95
Workforce Development 22%	16,914.88	-	497.26	311.98	8.80	17,732.91	5,055.36	22,788.27
Organizational Excellence - 12%	9,226.30	-	271.22	170.17	4.80	9,672.48	2,757.47	12,429.95
TOTAL COSTS	\$76,885.81	\$0	\$2,260.26	\$1,418.07	\$39.97	\$80,604.10	\$22,978.93	\$103,583.03