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**University Transportation Center for Mobility™**

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# Texas Transit Leadership Initiative

## ***Final Report***

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Suzie Edrington and Ryan Taylor**

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# TEXAS TRANSIT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

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# TEXAS TRANSIT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) worked closely with the Texas Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division (TxDOT-PTN) and rural and small urban transit managers to develop the Texas Transit Leadership Initiative (TTLI). The purpose of the initiative was to develop a comprehensive program to enhance the leadership capacity of transit professionals in each stage of a career in the public transportation industry in Texas.

TTI researched examples of national leadership development programs in the transit industry and interviewed over 40 transit professionals in Texas. The interviews showed there is broad support for a transit leadership program to enhance the leadership skills for current managers and to attract young people to a career in public transportation.

TxDOT-PTN also invited transit industry representatives to serve on an advisory committee to discuss priorities for the leadership initiative. The advisors adopted the following guiding principles for the TTLI:

- TTLI is a comprehensive and deliberate effort to identify, develop and support public transportation leaders in Texas throughout their entire careers.
- TTLI is created and sustained through a collaborative effort between TxDOT and public transportation providers in Texas.
- TTLI is more than an academic program. While formal training is critical to successful leadership development, this initiative will also emphasize various companion strategies, such as internships, counseling, mentoring, “in place” training tools and forums designed to enhance and apply leadership skills to resolve critical issues. Deliberate combining of formal training with these companion strategies is critical to the success of the program. Rather than act as a set of discrete activities, the combination of formal training and other strategies creates the synergy for a successful program.
- TTLI will create a resource environment for transit agencies individually and collectively to address their leadership needs – a “One Stop Shop for Leadership” concept.

Consistent with the TTLI guiding principles, the advisory committee identified five priority strategies as elements of a successful leadership development program.

1. Develop and deliver a Texas Transit Leadership Seminar.
2. Sponsor Leadership Challenge forums to enhance and apply leadership skills to resolve critical issues.
3. Encourage a Peer Program incorporating peer-to-peer assistance, internships and mentoring.
4. Assess existing training programs that emphasize interpersonal communication, facilitation and problem solving.
5. Develop a Transit Management Certificate Program to encourage students to consider a career in transit and to provide an opportunity for aspiring leaders to earn a certificate.



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this project was to research and develop a leadership development program that addresses the needs of rural and small urban transit managers at each stage of a career along a continuum from new employees just entering the industry to senior staff members who are anticipating retirement. The project goal was to establish a sustainable leadership development program that has value to the transit industry in Texas. The project was a collaborative effort of the TTI Transit Mobility Program and the Texas Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division.

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

In 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature approved House Bill 3588 that directed the Texas Transportation Commission to develop a methodology and formula for allocating state urban and rural public transportation funds and federal Section 5311 (non-urbanized area) funds among eligible providers based on performance and other factors. The Commission adopted a funding formula in 2004 and approved revisions in 2006. The objectives of the funding formula are to:

- Improve the delivery of transportation services;
- Generate efficiencies in operation that can lead to increased levels of service;
- Enhance customer service/satisfaction; and
- Encourage cooperation and coordination.

Responsibility for implementing the funding formula falls to TxDOT-PTN. Since 2006, researchers with the TTI Transit Mobility Program have worked with TxDOT-PTN to provide research support and technical assistance to implement the new performance-based funding formula. TTI developed a new web based TxDOT reporting form (PTN-128) to improve the accuracy and utility of the performance monitoring and reporting system for 38 rural and 30 urban transit systems. TTI also provides technical assistance for rural and small urban providers to address issues such as:

- staffing analysis,
- financial analysis and planning,
- cost allocation,
- business practice review,
- route efficiency and effectiveness studies,
- operations review, and
- peer reviews.

### **1.2 PROBLEM**

Based upon the experience of helping rural and small urban transit providers to transition to a performance-based funding system, TxDOT-PTN and TTI realized the need to develop a comprehensive leadership development program for transit managers.

### 1.3 APPROACH

That leadership development program addresses the needs of transit professionals at each stage of a career along a continuum including—but not limited to—the following:

- Senior staff with wisdom, knowledge, and experience – leadership development to focus on leaving a legacy, succession planning, and mentoring;
- Established managers who are most intensely involved in current issues – professional development to focus on problem solving for today and tomorrow;
- Leaders just beginning to take on management responsibility – professional development for young leaders who are interested in a career in public transportation and want to learn all aspects of the business; and
- New to the industry – professional development to provide exposure to the industry and focus on transit internship opportunities.

TTI and TxDOT-PTN developed the leadership program with the cooperation of rural and small urban transit providers. The intent was to develop a leadership development program that has value to the industry and can be sustainable.

The researchers conducted this study in three tasks. The first task was to research examples of national professional development programs with an emphasis on leadership development in the transit industry. The second task was to interview representatives of the transit industry in Texas to identify the need and support for a leadership development program for rural and small urban transit managers. The final task was to prioritize the strategies for successful implementation of the leadership program. TTI and TxDOT-PTN developed the leadership program in close cooperation with an advisory committee of general managers representing the transit industry in Texas. Researchers identified sponsors for implementation of the priority strategies. TTI and TxDOT-PTN sponsored the Texas Transit Leadership Seminar, and TTI continues to develop a Transit Management Certificate Program.

### 1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

Findings for this research report are summarized in each of three chapters of the report that follow this introduction:

- **Chapter 2.0** summarizes the findings of research to document examples of national professional development programs for transit.
- **Chapter 3.0** provides a report on the findings of interviews with 40 transit staff from Texas transit agencies to ask about needs and support for a leadership development program.
- **Chapter 4.0** presents the priority strategies for implementing a successful leadership development program.

## 2.0 EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The purpose of this chapter is to document the research of professional development programs with an emphasis on leadership development in the transit industry. This chapter is organized into five sections. A discussion of the use of terms provides clarification for references in the chapter. The next section of the report describes the methodology for identifying and selecting the most relevant leadership development programs in the transit industry. The final three sections describe the leadership development programs offered by national sponsors of professional development programs for the transit industry, state departments of transportation (DOT) and transit agencies.

### 2.1 USE OF TERMS

Professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Professional development includes all learning opportunities including college degrees, internships, formal coursework, conferences, workshops, and informal learning opportunities on-the-job. Informal learning opportunities often include training, coaching, mentoring, supervision, and technical assistance provided by a more senior colleague.

In his research on emotional intelligence and transformation leadership, M.M. Chemers defined leadership as “the process of social influence in which one person can...enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task” (1). Leadership has also been described as “the ability to get others to willingly follow” (2). In a formal business environment, leadership may come from older employees with more tenure that are likely to be higher in the organization. In contrast, other organizations allow young leaders to emerge. The contrast leads to the distinction between a manager and a leader (3). Others have expanded on the difference between managers and leaders, saying “a good manager does things right. A leader does the right things” (4).

The Transit Cooperative Research Program (TCRP) Synthesis Report 47, entitled *Corporate Culture as the Driver of Transit Leadership Practice* (5) provides relevant information regarding transit leadership development programs in the transit industry. The synthesis documented the state of practice in leadership development and innovative approaches to the problems faced in the current work environment. The research identified succession planning as an existing weakness in the transit industry. The report asserts that a strong leadership team will be a critical first step in meeting the demand for change and sustaining necessary changes in the transit industry.

As part of the project goal to develop a comprehensive leadership development program for transit managers, TxDOT-PTN and TTI refer to the transit career continuum in four phases and generally defined the type of leadership development expected for each phase. The following are

the phases of the career continuum as referenced in this report and the presumed focus for professional development:

- **New to the industry** – professional development to provide exposure to the industry with a focus on transit internship opportunities;
- **Aspiring leaders** just beginning to take on management responsibility – professional development for young leaders interested in a career in public transportation with emphasis on all aspects of transit;
- **Established managers** highly involved with current issues – professional development to focus on problem resolution for existing and future transit issues; and
- **Senior staff** with wisdom, knowledge and experience – leadership development to focus on leaving a legacy, succession planning and mentoring.

## 2.2 METHODOLOGY

Upon an initial search of leadership programs available to the transit industry, TTI determined the following three categories are most likely to have relevant and existing leadership programs:

- National sponsors for professional development programs for the transit industry with a focus on leadership;
- State departments of transportation ; and
- Internship programs by transit agencies.

Categorizing the groups of professional development programs allowed TTI to prioritize and concentrate on sponsors or programs most likely to have significant applications to this study. As a result, TTI selected and researched further the most relevant programs for each category. The sources of information included website searches, personal interviews and telephone interviews. The following three sections summarize existing programs for each category.

## 2.3 NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPONSORS

TTI identified 12 national sponsors providing 16 professional development programs of relevance to the leadership needs of the transit industry. The national sponsors included the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Eno Transportation Foundation, and National Transit Institute (NTI). These primary agencies are well known and respected in the transit industry. TTI expanded the research to include the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO), Advancing Women in Transportation (WTS), the American Public Transit Exams Institute (APTREX) and the South West Transit Association (SWTA). TTI supplemented the list with an online search to ensure all significant sponsors were included.

Additionally, the list of national sponsors for professional development programs includes four continuing education programs offered by universities.

Participation in some professional development programs is limited to persons from agencies that are members of the organization or association. In some programs, there are a few

restrictions on qualifications for some of the mid- and upper-level courses. These programs are important to the transit industry because they provide knowledge about the industry to existing transit professionals. The programs also tend to be respected due to their national or regional scope.

The following sections contain information for each of the 12 national sponsors and the relevant programs they provide. Profiles for the 16 programs highlight the significant attributes of each program. The order of sponsors is alphabetical.

### **Advancing Women in Transportation (WTS)**

Founded in 1977 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., WTS (formerly Women's Transportation Seminar) currently has roughly 4,400 members. WTS attempts to fulfill its vision of "transforming the transportation industry through the advancement of women," (6) by offering monthly programs with distinguished speakers, providing an annual conference and awards, maintaining a career center, publishing newsletters, and providing fellowships and scholarships. WTS also provides opportunities for leadership training and professional development.

WTS provides a Leadership Training Program, presented in cooperation with the Voorhees Transportation Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey. WTS designed the program specifically to cultivate female leaders in the transit industry.

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### ***Leadership Training Program***

#### **Description**

Geared toward women with promise for higher levels of responsibility

#### **Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

#### **Objectives**

Provide interaction with industry professionals

#### **Requirements**

Female, preferably mid-career professional

#### **Course Format**

Capacity: 14

Duration: four consecutive days

Setting: offered annually at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey

Content: provides personal interaction with leading industry professionals who challenge the analytical and creative skills of participants; also includes case studies and exercises dealing with complex issues of people, policy and politics.

#### **Contact Information**

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## **American Public Transit Exams Institute (APTREX)**

Founded in 1993 and headquartered in Point Roberts, Washington, APTREX provides accredited professional certification for management and supervisory employees of the transit industry. APTREX was founded as an examination center for the public transportation industry, offering the only accredited professional certification program available for management and supervisory employees. APTREX offers seven certifications upon completing examinations with a passing grade. The certifications cover almost the entire spectrum of the transit industry, from first line manager to board member.

The APTREX Certification Program is similar to professional certification programs found in other industries, such as real estate, accounting and healthcare. The International Transit Certification Review Board (ITCRB), a professional body composed of senior executives and educators, governs the APTREX certification process. The APTREX Certification Program was developed in concert with NTI, the educational arm of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

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### ***APTREX Certification***

#### **Description**

The goal of the APTREX Certification Program is to foster professional development, encourage individual leadership and help establish standardized performance measurements in the transit industry.

#### **Career Perspectives**

The APTREX Certification Program is for all levels of transit managers – ranging from first line supervisors to senior executives. Candidates may also include first line employees such as operators or mechanics who are seeking career advancement.

#### **Objectives**

Provide the following certifications:

- CTBM®—Certified Transit Board Member;
- CTEM®—Certified Transit Executive Manager;
- CTDM®—Certified Transit Department Manager;
- CTDVM®—Certified Transit Division Manager;
- CTSCM®—Certified Transit Section Manager;
- CTCCM<sup>SM</sup>—Certified Transit Control Center Manager; and
- CTFM®—Certified Transit First Line Manager.

#### **Requirements**

The APTREX Institute accredited certification process consists of these four steps:

1. Step One – Application Process
  - a. Applicant must file an application to request certification, which includes general biographical information, experience, education, training and skills assessment.
  - b. Must include references and two (2) letters of recommendation.
  - c. Application must be notarized.
  - d. Application process may take up to 30 days.

2. Step Two – Application Review Process
  - a. The Application Review Committee conducts a job certification analysis on the applicant based on the information contained on the application and recommendation letters.
  - b. A thorough investigation is conducted based on the application content and points calculated to determine eligibility to test. Each certification type requires a minimum number of base points.
  - c. The analysis consists of these key elements: Years of experience, budgetary/financial responsibility, educational background, training background, people responsibility and external interaction.
3. Step Three – Testing
  - a. Applicant is notified of the eligibility to test and given the exam dates.
  - b. Exams are 100-125 question multiple choices and essay. The number depends on the certification level sought.
  - c. Exam points are added along with the base application points from step 2. This determines if the applicant meets the required number of points to qualify for certification award.
4. Step Four – Certification Process
  - a. Applicant will be notified of the results within 30 days of taking the test.
  - b. Passing grades receive a certification. This includes a certificate and a letter documenting the certification awarded.
  - c. Certification designation expires three years from the award date, at which time the applicant will be notified of a renewal test to keep their designation active and use of the acronym.

Applicants that fail the test are eligible for a one-time retest within 30-day notice period.

#### **Course Format**

Setting: APTREX provides an orientation class for a maximum of 20 students for \$3,900. The partner institutions affiliated with APTREX (NTI, the Leadership Dynamics Group, Franklin Covey and the DMT Group) also provide orientation sessions. The one-day orientation session provides candidates with a complete overview of the certification process, helps prepare them for the exam and offers study guide suggestions. The orientation helps candidates select the certification level appropriate to their education and experience. APTREX recommends the orientation session, although it is not a requirement for certification. A Certification Study Guide is also available for purchase for \$109.

Faculty: The Institute operates under several cooperative agreements with its affiliated partners.

#### **Exam/Certification**

The Certification Exam tests the applicant's knowledge of the transit industry in the areas of business, management and operations. Testing takes two hours and consists of 100 to 125 multiple-choice questions and one essay question. Testing can be at the candidate's transit property, or at another mutually agreed upon location. The number of exam questions depends on the certification level sought. A minimum passing grade is required in order to achieve certification.

#### **Renewal**

Recertification is required every three years. One must maintain a minimum of 10 CEUs/IEUs (Educational Units) during this three-year period. Most training and educational schools and transit agency training programs offer educational units. Recertification does not require testing. Recertification every three years is \$399 for members of APTA and \$499 for non-members.

**Cost for Tests**

\$899 for members of APTA, \$999 to \$1,099 for non-members

**Contact Information**

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 American Public Transit Exams Institute  
 (360) 945-2150  
[dstumpo@aptrex.com](mailto:dstumpo@aptrex.com)  
 Webpage: <http://www.aptrex.com/>

The APTREX Certification Program covers up to 27 different areas of knowledge, as Table 1 illustrates. Individuals are tested on subject matters that fall within five levels of management in the transit industry. This includes first line supervisors to general managers/CEOs. An example of topics covered is included in the core competencies chart below. The certification testing requirements capture the main topics of experience and/or education required in each of the certification categories.

**Table 1. APTREX Certification Programs**

	CTBM CTEM	CTDM	CTDVM	CTSCM	CTFM CTCCM
Accounting/Budgets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Business Planning	✓	✓	✓		
Advertising/Marketing	✓	✓	✓		
Applied Economics	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customer Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
English	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reading, Writing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial Management	✓	✓	✓		
Government Relations	✓	✓			
Labor Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leadership	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Math	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mgmt Information Systems	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mgmt Practices and Theory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Organizational Behavior	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Law*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Performance Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Human Resource Mgmt/Diversity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Planning/Schedule	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Federal/State/Local	✓	✓	✓		
Problem Solving	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Safety/Security	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sociology	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Statistics	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Strategic Planning	✓	✓			
Transportation Management	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*Note: A blank cell indicates the area of knowledge is not included in the certification program.*

\* Law includes Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, and American Disability Association.

## **American Public Transportation Association (APTA)**

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., APTA serves as an advocate for the advancement of public transportation programs and initiatives in the United States. Since its founding in 1882, APTA has educated the public about the benefits of public transportation through organized bus, light rail, rapid transit and other programs. The association lobbies the U.S. Congress and local government bodies in favor of public transportation improvements and new developments.

APTA members include public bus, rapid transit and commuter rail systems and the private organizations responsible for planning, designing, constructing, financing, supplying and operating transit systems. In addition, government agencies, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), state departments of transportation, academic institutions and trade publications are also part of APTA's membership base.

As part of its focus on education, APTA partners with the American Public Transportation Foundation (APTF), the charitable affiliate of the APTA, provides scholarships, fellowships, transit education and research programs for students and professionals involved in or entering the public transportation field as a career.

APTA also provides professional development through its Leadership APTA Program, a yearlong program that admits 25 participants per year. The program has 275 graduates since the first Leadership APTA class.

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### ***Leadership APTA***

#### **Description**

Each year, the Leadership APTA Committee selects 25 individuals from among APTA applicants to participate in a yearlong program that includes intensive workshops, conferences, class leadership projects, teleconferences, online meetings and web-based events.

#### **Career Perspectives**

Manager

#### **Objectives**

- Identify, develop and support the future leaders of APTA and the next generation of public transportation industry leaders;
- Help participants identify, develop and refine their core leadership competencies and skills;
- Offer expert-led sessions and workshops facilitated by APTA's executive leadership, world-class transit industry leaders and renowned leadership experts;
- Provide meaningful class assignments and projects designed to address tough transit leadership decisions, thought-provoking issues and real-world public transportation challenges;
- Connect class members with respected leaders both within and outside the public transportation industry;
- Stimulate and foster individual development, teamwork and class growth;
- Educate participants about APTA, including its governance, organizational structure and leadership and development opportunities;
- Provide an immediate means for class members to give back to APTA and to the industry through work on class leadership projects and related opportunities;

- Introduce class members to APTA committee leadership and provide first-hand opportunities for class members to become actively involved in APTA committee work;
- Enable participation in APTA's Legislative Conference and Annual Meetings;
- Identify and address services, challenges, trends and major issues in public transportation;
- Support and sustain a collegial and professional environment that facilitates team building, networking and strong communication with a diverse group of Leadership APTA program participants, alumni and APTA members; and
- Incorporate direction, guidance, faculty assistance and programmatic support from members of the Leadership APTA Committee.

### **Requirements**

Leadership APTA is specifically for APTA members working for public transportation systems, private corporations, businesses and organizations related to the public transportation industry. Candidates can be general managers, assistant general managers, middle management personnel and other individuals with strong leadership potential working for public transportation systems, private sector businesses supplying goods or services to the transit industry, or other organizations related to the public transportation industry. The program recommends that individual organizations submit only one applicant. Individuals interested in applying for the program must provide the following information:

- Completed application form online.
- 1,000-word essay stating how and why the applicant will benefit from Leadership APTA. The essay should state career goals.
- Current resume, including current and past positions, with dates of experience in the public transportation and related industries.
- Two industry letters of recommendation. The first letter must come from the highest-ranking official of the candidate's transit agency, company or organization. The second may come from a direct supervisor, a client or a recent/former transit agency senior official.

### **Course Format**

Capacity: 25 selected per year

Duration: one year

Faculty: from transit industry

Setting: December workshop in Washington, D.C.; March Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C.; July workshop in Vancouver, B.C.; October Annual Meeting and Expo in Orlando, Florida (locations were for 2008-09 class); also includes teleconference meetings with class members, APTA committee leadership and APTA staff.

Content: key events and activities include:

- Online meeting prior to APTA Annual Meeting;
- Orientation and curricula information workshop sessions at the APTA Annual Meeting;
- One four-day intensive workshop in December;
- Full participation in APTA's March Legislative Conference;
- Selected Leadership APTA workshops connected to APTA's March Legislative Conference;
- One four-day intensive workshop in July;
- Completion of team-based leadership projects, based on current topics recommended and identified by class members;
- Interim online meetings and teleconference calls scheduled during the year; and
- Graduation ceremonies and presentation of class leadership projects in conjunction with APTA committee meetings, conference sessions and related events at the APTA Annual Meeting.

The link below shows examples of leadership presentations and papers from previous classes.

<http://www.apta.com/about/committees/leader/presentations.cfm>

**Cost**

\$3,000 (includes workshop books and materials, some meals and expenses during the Leadership APTA workshops, March APTA Legislative Conference registration materials and some meals, APTA Annual Meeting registrations, including Leadership APTA luncheons and some meals)

**Contact Information**

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Webpage: <http://www.apta.com/about/committees/leader>

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**Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA)**

CTAA was originally founded by those providing and advocating for new mobility strategies within rural communities and in connecting these communities to each other and the broader urbanized areas that lie over the horizon.

Headquartered in Washington, D.C., CTAA provides a range of benefits to the transit industry, such as offering an annual EXPO, numerous seminars and other events, maintaining a magazine, providing technical assistance and conducting training and professional development. The two professional development courses of relevance to this project are the Certified Community Transit Manager (CCTM) and the Certified Community Transit Supervisory (CCTS) training. Each course provides certification for professionals from different levels of the transit industry.

---

***Certified Community Transit Manager*****Description**

Course designed to prepare individuals for exam to earn CCTM certification.

**Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

**Objectives**

To prepare individuals for the exam to earn certification as CCTM

Objectives of CTAA certification program include:

- Raise the standards of the profession;
- Reward individuals who have obtained expertise;
- Increase chances for professional mobility;
- Help assure organizational goal attainment;
- Improve the provision of transit services; and
- Encourage self-improvement.

**Requirements**

Individual must currently be engaged in the provision of transit services in a managerial or supervisory role, or have been engaged in the provision of those services within the past five years.

**Course Format**

Capacity: 30

Duration: two-day study class

Faculty: CTAA staff

Setting: classroom

Content: The course prepares individuals in each of the five examination topics:

- Human resource management;
- Financial management;
- Operational management;
- Transit development; and
- Procurement and contracting.

**Exam/Certification**

Exam offered annually at CTAA Community Transit Expo and at regional sites as advertised.

To sit for the exams the applicant must have a completed application, two letters of reference and the appropriate examination fees.

**Renewal**

A recertification process is available.

**Cost**

\$200 for CTAA members and \$250 for non-members

**Contact Information**

Len Cahill, Training Coordinator

Community Transportation Association of America

(202) 415-9653

[cahill@ctaa.org](mailto:cahill@ctaa.org)

Webpage: <http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=33&z=36>

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***Certified Community Transit Supervisory (CCTS) Training*****Description**

Training and certification program for front-line transit managers and supervisors.

**Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

**Objectives**

To prepare individuals for the exam to earn certification as CCTS

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Duration: three-day study class

Setting: classroom

Content: the course prepares individuals in each of the four examination topics:

- Effective Leadership;
- Employee Management;
- Training and Record Keeping; and
- Safety and Risk Management.

**Exam/Certification**

Participants are tested in all four course areas at the conclusion of training to earn CCTS certification.

**Renewal**

Certification must be renewed every three years.

**Cost**

\$200 for CTAA members, \$250 for non-members

**Contact Information**

Len Cahill, Training Coordinator  
Community Transportation Association of America  
(202) 415-9653  
[cahill@ctaa.org](mailto:cahill@ctaa.org)  
Webpage: <http://web1.ctaa.org/webmodules/webarticles/anmviewer.asp?a=34&z=5>

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**Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO)**

Founded in 1971 in Washington, D.C., COMTO is “the premier organization for the training, education and professional development of minority transportation officials” (7). COMTO has 39 chapters nationwide and provides annual conferences, maintains a newsletter and offers webinars, training and professional development. The two COMTO programs relevant to this research are the TCRP Ambassador Program and Careers in Transportation for Youth (CITY).

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***Transit Cooperative Research Program Ambassador Program*****Description**

Developed in 1998 as a joint effort between APTA, COMTO, FTA and TCRP

**Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

**Objectives**

- Develop a core group of talented industry professionals to serve as “ambassadors” with the requisite knowledge, technical skills and abilities to enhance the understanding, acceptance and utilization of TCRP-sponsored research products;
- Assist transit providers in exploring the latest developments in advanced technologies, innovative management techniques and best operating practices as investigated by TCRP;
- Inform transit properties about TCRP research and how transit professionals can participate; and
- Serve TCRP as a source of information on research efforts conducted by transit properties, the successes and challenges of implementing TCRP and other transit research in the field.

**Requirements**

Applicants are determined during a nomination process. The nominee should have practical transit and field experience and currently work in the transit industry.

**Course Format**

Capacity: 15 to 20 at a time, 6 to 9 selected per year  
Duration: two years  
Faculty: n/a  
Setting: Any of the 39 COMTO chapters  
Content: 3 days of introductory training; must attend transit conferences

**Cost**

None

**Contact Information**

Ramonica D.M. Moore, Marketing and Communications Specialist

Conference of Minority Transportation Officials

(202) 530-0551 ext. 309

[rmoore@comto.org](mailto:rmoore@comto.org)

Webpage: <http://www.comto.org/news-tcrp.php>

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***Careers in Transportation for Youth Internship Program*****Description**

CITY is an internship program for college students who have an interest in public transit or a transportation related career.

**Career Perspectives**

Students interested in transit as a career

**Objectives**

Work with educational entities, government and affiliate partners to provide timely training and educational programs specific to the current and future requirements of the employers in the transportation industry

Orient students to the transit industry by providing internships and mentoring

**Requirements**

Completion of sophomore year in college

**Course Format**

Capacity: 3 to 4 students for each selected city

Duration: 10 weeks

Faculty: supervisory personnel at internship assignment

Setting: transit agencies, private transit-related consulting firms, transportation service providers, manufacturers for each selected city (2009 cities are Chicago, Jacksonville and Philadelphia).

Content: includes travel to the National Meeting and Training Conference

**Cost**

COMTO pays interns

**Contact Information**

Ramonica D.M. Moore, Marketing and Communications Specialist

Conference of Minority Transportation Officials

(202) 530-0551 ext. 309

[rmoore@comto.org](mailto:rmoore@comto.org)

Webpage: <http://www.comto.org/news-city.php>

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**Eno Transportation Foundation**

The Eno Transportation Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving all modes of transportation. Transportation planning pioneer William Phelps Eno established the Eno Transportation Foundation in 1921 with the goal of improving traffic control and safety. Today, the Eno Transportation Foundation works to cultivate creative leadership and frame emerging issues in the transportation field through its professional development programs, public policy forums and publications. The organization is an operating foundation and does not make

grants. About half of the Foundation's work is supported by its endowment; tuition and fees, contracts and publication sales support the remainder.

The Eno Center for Transportation Leadership focuses on leadership education across the career span of transportation professionals – from emerging professionals to mid-career managers, executives and board members. The Center tailors courses to complement and support other industry training. In addition, the Center conducts needs assessments and research, develops course curricula and manages courses from concept through evaluation.

There are four categories of courses offered by the Center for Transportation Leadership: Governing Board Members, Executives, Mid-Career Managers and Emerging Professionals. Course participants broaden their perspectives, gain insights into future industry trends and are welcomed into an extensive alumni community. Some of the courses are directed toward leaders across all modes of transportation. For example, each year the Eno Leadership Development Conference (established in 1992) brings a select group of the top graduate students in transportation and related disciplines to Washington, D.C. for an introduction to how transportation policy and programs are formed. Other courses focus on a particular transportation field. The International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA) Leadership Academy (founded in 2008) is tailored specifically for senior-level managers in public- and private-sector organizations that serve the toll industry.

The Center for Transportation Leadership features three courses that focus on the transit industry. The Transit Executive Seminar (established in 2004) is discussed in the profile below. The Center also introduced two other courses for the transit industry in 2009.

- The course for Governing Board Members is the Transit Governing Board Summit. As transit's ever-increasing role in the economic, social and environmental viability of a community captures national attention, the policy challenges of transit governing boards become more visible. In an effort to ensure that transit board members are educated to make the decisions for their communities and regions, APTA, the Eno Transportation Foundation and NTI partnered to develop a national transit board member training. The first course was announced in 2009.
- The Center offers a new course for Mid-Career Managers. Transit employees in the management ranks will join colleagues from North American transit agencies to hone their management skills and learn about their management styles.

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### ***Transit Executive Seminar***

#### **Description**

The Eno Transit Executive Seminar is tailored specifically for senior-level managers in public transportation agencies and in companies that serve the transit industry. The program is geared toward those employees who are preparing to assume executive management roles in their organization or employees recently appointed to such roles. The program is an intensive weeklong course held twice a year in two different cities. Over 230 transit senior leaders from 100 organizations have participated as of 2009.

## **Career Perspectives**

Tailored specifically for senior-level leaders

## **Objectives**

Expected outcomes fall into three areas of understanding:

### The Industry

- Articulate the business of transit;
- Appreciate the historical perspective; and
- Gain insights into future trends in policy and funding.

### The Organization

- Broaden perspective from professional expertise to that of the chief executive;
- Enlarge concepts of leading organizations;
- Recognize ways to strengthen governing boards and staff; and
- Expand stakeholder understanding.

### The Individual

- Align leadership strengths;
- Develop competencies in self-knowledge;
- Seek feedback;
- Question assumptions;
- Enhance thinking habits;
- Expand current systems of peer support and feedback; and
- Build on experience to identify areas of future development.

## **Requirements**

Applicants must be a senior leader in transit organization, FTA senior staff or companies serving the transit industry. Applicants must submit a letter of interest and resume and nomination letter from the chief executive officer.

## **Course Format**

The program includes two one-week sessions for 50 senior-level leaders. In 2009, the first session was in Salt Lake City, UT, and the second week in Washington, D.C. The curriculum includes individual coaching, small group workshops, leadership assessments and classroom instruction. Faculty: Industry leaders who volunteer their time to share “lessons learned.”

## **Cost**

\$3,300 includes course materials and selected meals (not travel and hotel). Scholarships are available.

## **Contact Information**

Dr. Barbara K. Gannon, Executive Director  
Eno Center for Transportation Leadership  
Eno Transportation Foundation  
(978) 281-6512

[bgannon@enotrans.com](mailto:bgannon@enotrans.com)

Webpage: [http://www.enotrans.com/index.asp?Type=B\\_BASIC&SEC={F8BC6A13-A41E-4D73-B10A-D0B825DD09B1}](http://www.enotrans.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={F8BC6A13-A41E-4D73-B10A-D0B825DD09B1})

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## **National Transit Institute (NTI)**

Founded in 1992, NTI is housed at the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The mission of NTI is “to provide training, education and clearinghouse services in support of public transportation and quality of life in the United States” (8). In addition to hosting online courses and webinars, NTI provides

approximately 70 training courses for the transit industry covering program areas such as advanced technologies, multimodal planning, transit management and workforce safety.

NTI has three professional development programs: Senior Leadership, Fundamentals of Transit Supervision and the Transit Academy.

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### ***Senior Leadership***

#### **Description**

The Senior Leadership program provides a training and educational opportunity for upper-level transit managers. The program provides participants with a comprehensive and integrated set of information necessary for successful executive careers.

#### **Career Perspectives**

Future senior leaders in transit, who are currently in middle and upper middle management positions, who have recently advanced to a higher level position or will advance in the near future.

#### **Objectives**

Upon completing the course, participants have broadened their professional capabilities as well as have a better understanding of the requirements and challenges of executive management positions.

#### **Requirements**

Applicant should be at managerial level in transit industry.

#### **Course Format**

Capacity: 30

Duration: 3 days

Faculty: active practitioners, academics, transit industry executives, government officials

Setting: classroom environment at hosting transit property

Content: course covers the following topics:

- What makes a leader;
- Building managerial and leadership skills;
- Working in a public environment;
- Succeeding in the transit industry;
- Thinking strategically and conceptually;
- Mastering external dynamics;
- Implementing change successfully; and
- Confronting evolving issues.

#### **Cost**

\$795

#### **Contact Information**

Barbara Van Dyke, Program Coordinator

National Transportation Institute

(732) 932-1700 ext 211

[bvandyke@nti.rutgers.edu](mailto:bvandyke@nti.rutgers.edu)

Webpage: <http://www.ntionline.com/CourseInfo.asp?CourseNumber=ID406>

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## ***Fundamentals of Transit Supervision***

### **Description**

NTI designed this course to teach new supervisors strategies for dealing with common challenges and the skills to avoid future problems.

### **Career Perspectives**

This course is for staff in their first supervisory position with management responsibilities. The course content is also of value to existing supervisors requiring additional development or desiring a refresher course.

### **Objectives**

This course helps new supervisors see themselves as an integral part of management and provides them both strategies and skill to assist them in transitioning into supervision. Participants will be able to:

- View themselves as part of “management”;
- Supervise former colleagues, friends;
- Deal with people, not just tasks;
- Build teams and motivate workers;
- Handle discipline;
- Define and maintain performance standards;
- Give and receive constructive feedback;
- Coach others;
- Avoid the pitfalls of overusing power;
- Establish goals for workgroups; and
- Manage time.

### **Requirements**

Should be in a supervisory position

### **Course Format**

Duration: 1 day

Faculty: active practitioners, academics

Setting: classroom environment at hosting transit property

Content: lectures, hands-on activities, role-playing

### **Cost:**

About \$2,000 per course. The cost of the course is subject to negotiation between NTI and the hosting transit property; the course is not available to local, state or federal government employees or to contractors and consultants.

### **Contact Information**

Barbara Van Dyke, Program Coordinator

National Transportation Institute

(732) 932-1700 ext 211

[bvandyke@nti.rutgers.edu](mailto:bvandyke@nti.rutgers.edu)

Webpage: <http://www.ntionline.com/CourseInfo.asp?CourseNumber=ID402>

## ***Transit Academy***

### **Description**

The Transit Academy is a comprehensive, behind-the-scenes study of a major transit system. NTI designed the course to provide those new to transit with an in-depth understanding of the scope of responsibilities, variety of skills and range of activities that work together in delivering safe and efficient transit service. The academy uses lectures, demonstrations, hands-on activities and

facility tours. Key transit agency personnel serve as instructors ready to share their knowledge and experience – applicants learn from those who do the work. The program covers the broad range of responsibilities and functions in a major transit system – transforming the entire organization into a learning laboratory.

### **Career Perspectives**

This four-day academy program is for professionals and decision-makers new to the transit industry and those who can benefit from an in-depth exposure to transit and its people.

### **Objectives**

- See firsthand what is required to operate a transit agency;
- Understand how the many functions within an agency work together to deliver transit service;
- Participate in briefings and discussions, led by transit leaders, critical issues affecting transit;
- Learn how public policy decisions affect the functioning and needs of a transit agency;
- Hands-on experience visiting bus, train, or light rail operations facilities and control centers;
- Tour bus/train/light rail maintenance facilities;
- Visit major multimodal interchange points;
- Interact with key agency staff in informal discussions throughout the program; and
- Ride the transit system to gain valuable insight relating to routes and schedules.

### **Requirements**

None

### **Course Format**

Capacity: 35

Duration: 4 days

Faculty: transit agency personnel

Setting: classroom environment at hosting transit property

Content: lectures, demonstrations, hands-on activities and transit facility tours

### **Exam/Certification**

Exam

### **Cost**

\$450

### **Contact Information**

Barbara Van Dyke, Program Coordinator

National Transportation Institute

(732) 932-1700 ext 211

[bvandyke@nti.rutgers.edu](mailto:bvandyke@nti.rutgers.edu)

Webpage: <http://www.ntionline.com/CourseInfo.asp?CourseNumber=ID413>

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## **Iowa State University**

Located in Ames, Iowa, Iowa State University has a total enrollment of approximately 27,000. Iowa State offers an online course relevant to this study called Supervisory Skills and Techniques.

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### ***Supervisory Skills and Techniques***

#### **Description**

Online course that covers basic supervisory and management techniques

#### **Career Perspectives**

New to the industry, Leader, Manager

**Objectives**

Identify the differences between a supervisor and a worker, and what strengths and techniques can be employed for an improved leadership role. Understand the importance of communicating effectively with fellow employees and fellow managers. Learn techniques to motivate employees and to better manage time and activities resulting in high quality work products.

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Faculty: Duane Smith, Institute for Transportation

Setting: online, through Department of Engineering Distance Education

Content: includes videos, self-assessment inventories and case studies

Course covers the following topics:

- The supervisor's role and leadership responsibilities;
- Motivating employees;
- Communicating effectively;
- Discipline for success; and
- Managing effectively.

**Cost**

\$75

**Contact Information**

Duane Smith, Associate Director

Institute for Transportation

Iowa State University

(515) 294-8103

[desmith@iastate.edu](mailto:desmith@iastate.edu)

Webpage: [http://www.intrans.iastate.edu/ltap/successful\\_mgmt.htm](http://www.intrans.iastate.edu/ltap/successful_mgmt.htm)

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**North Carolina State University**

Located in Raleigh, North Carolina, North Carolina State University has a total enrollment of approximately 30,000. North Carolina State offers a course called Transportation Leadership Development Program, which consists of self-study and two seminars.

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***Transportation Leadership Development Program*****Description**

Self-study program with two seminars

**Career Perspectives**

New, Leader, Manager

**Objectives**

The University designed the class to teach decision-making and other leadership skills, including communication, teamwork, mentoring and team building.

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Capacity: 20, offered twice annually

Duration: 12 weeks, including two three-day seminars

Faculty: developers of the curriculum Ginny Blair and David Foote

Setting: seminars are in Salisbury, NC, and Clemmons, NC

Content: self-study, two seminars, covers the following topics:

- Building a framework for learning and establishing mutual expectations;
- Finalizing the learning framework and using organizational models;
- Common and critical skills for decision-making and leadership;
- Assessing your current decision-making strategy and exploring types of decisions;
- Gathering facts and gathering information;
- Using analytical tools;
- Generating alternatives and learning from your decisions;
- Exercising leadership;
- What do leaders do;
- Leaders as communicators and motivators;
- Sharing knowledge, skills and information with others; and
- Forming one's own leadership style.

**Exam/Certification**

Must complete individual and group work, presentation to complete the program, 12 CEUs offered through North Carolina State University

**Cost**

\$2,160 (\$1,560 for tuition, \$300 for each seminar; lodging and travel not included)

**Contact Information**

Debbie Collins, Co-Director

Public Transportation Group

North Carolina State University/Institute for Transportation Research and Education

(704) 639-7653

[dgcollins@carolina.rr.com](mailto:dgcollins@carolina.rr.com)

Webpage: <http://www.itre.ncsu.edu/PTG/education/TLDP.html>

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**North Dakota State University**

Located in Fargo, North Dakota, North Dakota State University has a total enrollment of approximately 12,000. North Dakota State offers Principles of Transit Management, a three-day seminar for the transit industry.

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***Principles of Transit Management***

**Description**

Covers aspects of transit and paratransit management for rural and small urban operators, geared toward transit managers who have been working in the industry for less than five years.

**Career Perspectives**

New, Leader, Manager

**Objectives**

To teach transit and paratransit management

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Capacity: 25

Duration: 3 days

Setting: Cedar Shore Resort, Oacoma, South Dakota; the University recently delivered the course following a CTAA conference and has offered the program for other areas of the country

Content: course covers the following topics:

- Human resource management;
- Financial management;
- Administration;
- Operations and service design;
- Procurement;
- Vehicle and facility maintenance;
- Safety, security and emergency management; and
- Drug and alcohol program compliance.

**Cost**

\$290 (\$195 for materials, \$95 for meals)

**Contact Information**

Carol Wright, Associate Director of Training and Outreach

North Dakota State University

(701) 231-8231

[carol.wright@ndsu.edu](mailto:carol.wright@ndsu.edu)

Webpage: <http://www.surtc.org/training/details/2009transitmngmt.php>

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**South West Transit Association (SWTA)**

SWTA is a regional transit association covering Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. SWTA was formed in 1979 to represent transit agencies and others interested in public transit issues. The mission of SWTA is to “provide a community of education, communication and advocacy in which members can strengthen their ability to provide public transportation services and products” (9). SWTA offers a variety of conferences and seminars, including Transit Leadership Development 101 and the Transit Management and Paratransit Management Course.

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***Transit Leadership Development 101*****Description**

For new supervisors who need to learn how to avoid beginner blunders and become a respected leader in the organization.

**Career Perspectives**

New supervisors or leaders

**Objectives**

To provide training for new supervisors

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Capacity: 23

Duration: 3 days

Faculty: seasoned transit professionals

Setting: rotates, first course was in Little Rock, Arizona, in 2009. The concept is to take the course to different regional locations to minimize the travel for participants.

Content: course covers the following topics:

- What really motivates people;
- Leadership skills from the inside-out;
- Mentoring, coaching and team-building skills;
- How to supervise former peers and current friends;
- Project management for big and small projects;
- How to deal with difficult people; and
- Organizing the paperwork.

**Exam/Certification**

Certification provided by Alliant International University

**Cost**

\$445 for members, \$525 for non-members

**Contact Information**

Kristen Joyner, Executive Director

South West Transit Association

(512) 237-9733

[kjoyner@swta.org](mailto:kjoyner@swta.org)

Webpage: [http://www.swta.org/blog/?page\\_id=82](http://www.swta.org/blog/?page_id=82)

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***Transit Management and Paratransit Management Course*****Description**

Intensive training tailored to the specific needs of the transit and paratransit industry.

**Career Perspectives**

New, Leader

**Objectives**

To provide basic transit and paratransit training

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Capacity: 23

Duration: 10 days

Faculty: seasoned transit professionals

Setting: varies; location of the next course is to be announced

Content: includes interaction among peers, intensive classroom study and practical application for transit and paratransit professionals.

**Exam/Certification**

Certification qualifies as a prerequisite to the CTAA Certified Community Transit Manager certification exam

**Cost**

Not available

**Contact Information**

Kristen Joyner, Executive Director

South West Transit Association

(512) 237-9733

[kjoyner@swta.org](mailto:kjoyner@swta.org)

Webpage: [http://www.swta.org/blog/?page\\_id=82](http://www.swta.org/blog/?page_id=82)

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**University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

Located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee has a total enrollment of approximately 25,000. Wisconsin-Milwaukee offers Fundamentals of Public Transit, a two-day seminar for the transit industry.

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***Fundamentals of Public Transit*****Description**

This course provides a broad overview of many aspects of the transit industry.

**Career Perspectives**

New, Leader

**Objectives**

To serve as an introduction or refresher for any individual involved in the provision of public transportation.

**Requirements**

None

**Course Format**

Capacity: Generally, 30 – can split the class and bring in second instructor if class gets too large.

Duration: 2 days

Faculty: Peter T. Albrecht, 36 years of experience in the transit industry

Setting: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee School of Continuing Education classroom

Content: course covers the following topics:

- History of public transportation in the United States;
- Benefits of public transportation;
- Basic concepts of transit planning and operations;
- Introduction to transportation finance and financial management;
- Basic concepts of performance measurement and the importance of service benchmarks;
- Techniques and concepts to effectively market transit service; and
- Review of laws and regulations governing public transportation.

**Exam/Certification**

No exam

Course provides 1.4 CEUs through University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

**Cost**

\$650

**Contact Information**

Ken Woodall, Outreach Specialist  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
(414) 227-3332

[woodall@uwm.edu](mailto:woodall@uwm.edu)

Webpage: <http://www4.uwm.edu/SCE/course.cfm?id=302>

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## 2.4 STATE DEPARTMENTS OF TRANSPORTATION

State departments of transportation also sponsor professional development courses. TTI did not contact all 50 state DOTs but instead identified states that have a greater probability of having the financial resources and the personnel necessary to develop and support or sponsor professional development programs. TTI identified 15 states that fund public transportation and provide support for the public transportation industry in the state.

The fifteen states are California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. TTI contacted each of the fifteen state DOTs and identified four states with relevant professional development programs: Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Washington.

### **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)**

The FDOT sponsors the annual Professional Development Workshop in conjunction with the Florida Public Transit Association (FPTA) and the University of South Florida's Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR).

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### *Professional Development Workshop*

**Department**

Florida Department of Transportation

**Description**

Combines structured training courses, project/program specific presentations, panel sessions and roundtable discussions on transportation.

**Career Perspectives**

New, Leader, Manager

**Industry Group Target**

For all transit agencies regardless of size or service area

**Curriculum**

2009 Workshop includes the following topics:

- Stepping into Supervision;
- Essential Supervisory/Managing Skills – Hiring, Firing and Layoffs; and
- Transit 101 – Basics of Transit Service Planning.

**Course Format**

Where: 2 day course in Tampa, Florida, in 2009

How Often: offered annually

Faculty: primarily CUTR staff

**Contact Information**

Amber Reep, Senior Research Associate

Center for Urban Research/University of South Florida

(813) 974-9823

[reep@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:reep@cutr.usf.edu)

Webpage: <http://www3.cutr.usf.edu/fpta>

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**Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)**

The Ohio DOT provides a Transportation Certificate Program, in partnership with Wright State University and Kent State University–Stark Campus to provide professional development one weekend each semester for individuals already employed in the transit industry.

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***Transportation Certificate Program*****Description**

Three-course curriculum in public transit and social services transportation management, developed in cooperation with Wright State University and sponsored by Ohio DOT, includes overview of transit funding and operations, as well as social services transportation funding and operations.

**Career Perspectives**

New, Leader

**Industry Group Target**

Public and private non-profit passenger transportation industry

**Curriculum**

Typical college course with practical assignments, such as ride the Greater Dayton Regional Transit Authority and write observations as they relate to specific topics like customer service and ease of access. Additionally, the course will include guest speakers from the transit industry and social service transportation agencies, midterm and final exams.

**Course Format**

Where: Wright State University (WSU) and Kent State University–Stark Campus

How Often: one course offered every semester. In addition, Ohio DOT recently began a one-hour credit course at WSU on weekends (two consecutive Saturdays) for individuals already employed in passenger transit. The plan is to offer the weekend course each semester.

Faculty: each instructor works for the university and has a graduate degree with extensive experience in the public transit and social services transportation profession.

**Certification**

Students must complete the core courses as well as several other courses and must complete an internship to obtain certificate. Ohio DOT provides funding to pay a stipend for those participating in the internship and assists in recruiting transit systems to provide internship sites.

**Contact Information**

Marianne E. Freed, Administrator  
Office of Transit  
Ohio Department of Transportation  
(614) 466-7084  
[Marianne.freed@dot.state.oh.us](mailto:Marianne.freed@dot.state.oh.us)

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**Pennsylvania Department of Transportation**

The Pennsylvania DOT (PennDOT) offers professional development through the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (PennTRAIN). PennDOT is in the process of expanding the courses offered in transit leadership training. Currently, PennTRAIN offers the Professional Supervisor/Manager Workshop, a course consisting of four levels.

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***Professional Supervisor/Manager Workshop*****Description**

Consists of 4 levels, three-day seminars for each level

**Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

**Industry Group Target**

Open to all groups of the transit industry

**Curriculum**

- Level 100: Understanding Supervision, Becoming a Coach, Communications, Self Esteem/Building Confidence, Relationship Change, Your Role in Counseling Employees, Understanding What the Customer Needs, FTA/DOT Funding and Supervisor's Role in Personnel Management
- Level 200: The Work of Supervision, What is Expected of Employees, Positive and Progressive Discipline, Analyzing Performance Gaps, Customer Service, What Holds You Back, Managing Your Time, Danger Zones for Supervisors, Conflict and Stress Management, How and What to Delegate and A Look at Teams
- Level 300: Building Your Team at Work, Coaching Role Plays and Drama in Workplace, Defining Supervisor's Role in Safety, Drug & Alcohol Testing Program & Administration, Discrimination, Workplace Violence, Worker's Compensation/Return to Work, Understanding Your Personality, Working With and Understanding Your Bosses' Personality and Self Assertiveness/Public Speaking
- Level 400: What Prevents You From Doing Your Best Work, Leadership, Multi-Year Life Plan, Ethics and Leadership, Window and Mirror and Principles of Supervision

**Course Format**

Where: Gettysburg, Pennsylvania  
How Often: each course is offered once each year  
Faculty: PennDOT personnel, transit professionals and consultants

**Contact Information**

Cindy Conaway, Program Coordinator  
Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association/PennTRAIN  
(800) 847-0333  
[cconaway@pennttrain.net](mailto:cconaway@pennttrain.net)

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## ***Professional Leadership Development with Eno Transportation Foundation***

### **Description**

Concept is to develop a comprehensive leadership program for aspiring leaders and current managers

### **Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

### **Industry Group Target**

Pennsylvania small urban and rural transit managers

### **Curriculum**

Developed by Eno Transportation Foundation for PennTRAIN with funding provided by PennDOT

### **Course Format**

Series of seminars beginning with a two-day retreat, followed by three one-day seminars

### **Cost**

PennDOT provides full scholarships for participants

### **Contact Information**

Toby Fauver , Deputy Secretary for Local and Area Transportation  
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation  
717-787-3921  
[tfauver@state.pa.us](mailto:tfauver@state.pa.us)

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## **Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT)**

The Washington DOT hosts the Willamette University Leadership Training in Seattle, an intense two-week training conducted annually by staff from Willamette University.

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## ***Willamette University Leadership Training***

### **Description**

Intense two-week leadership training hosted annually by WSDOT, provided by Willamette University

### **Career Perspectives**

Leader, Manager

### **Industry Group Target**

All transit agencies including non-profit are welcome to attend

### **Curriculum**

- Public transportation – issues and challenges;
- Managing the operation effectively;
- Enhancing leadership effectiveness;
- Budgeting and financial management;
- Managing the policy environment – regulations, funding and local policy;
- Service quality management;
- Human resources management;
- Marketing and customer service;
- Managing your maintenance; and
- Risk management, safety and security.

**Course Format**

Where: Seattle, Washington  
How Often: annually  
Faculty: Willamette University staff

**Certification**

Yes

**Contact Information**

Ronda Fullerton, Transportation Planning Technician  
Washington Department of Transportation  
(360) 705-7911  
[fullerr@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:fullerr@wsdot.wa.gov)

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## 2.5 INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY TRANSIT AGENCIES

An internship in a public transit agency is a way to provide exposure to the transit industry for students in college and to recruit new personnel and possible future leaders into the transit industry. TTI contacted the 10 transit agencies in Texas that serve areas of population greater than 200,000 to learn about formal internship programs. In addition, APTA suggested eight large transit agencies outside of Texas believed to have internship programs. TTI contacted each of the total 18 transit agencies. Nine agencies responded with information about formal internship programs:

- Capital Metro Transportation Authority (Capital Metro);
- Citibus (Lubbock, Texas);
- Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The T);
- Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO);
- VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA);
- Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA);
- King County Department of Transportation;
- Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA); and
- Tri-County Metropolitan District of Oregon (TriMet).

Noteworthy among responses from the transit agencies is the trend of diminishing internship opportunities due to financial conditions. Four of the respondents reported shrinking internship programs, three of which were due to internal financial circumstances and/or external economic conditions. One agency is in the process of phasing out its internship program due to financial constraints. Another agency has brought its program back after a two-year absence, although the internship positions are now unpaid.

Despite the current economic environment, the nine transit agencies that responded offered the following internship opportunities.

## **Capital Metro Transportation Authority**

Capital Metro provides transit service to Austin, Texas, and the surrounding area and has an agency-wide internship program that typically retains three to eight interns at a given time.

### **Type of Internship**

Agency-wide college internships

### **Level of Educational Achievement**

Must be a full-time college level junior or senior or graduate student

### **University Recruitment**

Actively recruit in central Texas area, but internships are available to any student who applies

### **Most Common Academic Programs**

Community and Regional Planning, Information Technology, Engineering, Business, Human Resources and Communications

### **Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Capital Metro has always used interns

### **Number of Internships per Term**

Depends on business need of each hiring division, but typically three to eight interns at any given time

### **Duration**

Students typically commit for each semester, although an internship can last for more than one semester.

### **Hours per Week**

Flexible, typically 5-15 hours per week

### **Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

Risk Management, Planning, Information Technology, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) office, Human Resources, Fixed Route Services (training film production), Business & Community Development.

### **Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

Several interns work for Capital Metro in a professional position upon graduation

### **Contact Information**

Kim Peterson

Employee Relations and Human Resources Information System Manager

Capital Metro Transportation Authority

(512) 369-6274

[Kim.peterson@capmetro.org](mailto:Kim.peterson@capmetro.org)

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## **Citibus**

Citibus provides transit service to Lubbock, Texas, and the surrounding area and has an internship program that hires students, provides transit experience and a training process designed to develop interns into managers.

### **Type of Internship**

College students work in different capacities and are eligible for training in other aspects of transit if they show an interest in transit management. They will learn all aspects of the transit system and will attend training sessions (typically National Transit Institute or Transportation Safety Institute) to become managers.

**Level of Educational Achievement**

Typically undergraduate students

**University Recruitment**

Texas Tech University, Lubbock Christian University, Wayland Baptist University and South Plains College

**Most Common Academic Programs**

All majors accepted

**Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Program has been in effect since the mid-1980s

**Number of Internships per Term**

Varies

**Duration**

Varies depending on intern graduation dates and when positions for managers come open

**Hours per Week**

Flexible, depending on intern class schedules

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

All departments

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

Eighteen people have been promoted to manager positions at other properties because of this program

**Contact Information**

Shannon Garrett, Director of Legislative Affairs and Marketing

Citibus

(806) 712-2009

[sgarrett@citbus.com](mailto:sgarrett@citbus.com)

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**Fort Worth Transportation Authority**

The T provides transit service to Fort Worth, Texas, and the surrounding area and offers internships as the budget allows, employing three interns in 2008.

**Type of Internship**

Agency-wide internships as resources allow

**Level of Educational Achievement**

No requirements

**University Recruitment**

All opportunities are posted at [jobing.com](http://jobing.com), which partners with all Dallas-Fort Worth area universities

**Most Common Academic Programs**

Various Programs

**Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Unknown

**Number of Internships per Term**

Provided as budget allows

**Duration**

Varies

**Hours per Week**

Depends on department; typically 20-24 hours per week

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

In 2008, three interns worked for the Accounting, Operations and Vanpool assistance departments

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

No information provided

**Contact Information**

Donnetta Chance, Hiring Coordinator  
Fort Worth Transportation Authority (The T)  
(817) 215-8600  
[dchance@the-t.com](mailto:dchance@the-t.com)

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**Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County**

METRO provides transit service to Houston, Texas, and the surrounding area and has an agency-wide summer internship program.

**Type of Internship**

Agency-wide unpaid summer internships

**Level of Educational Achievement**

Generally junior or senior undergraduate students and/or graduate students

**University Recruitment**

University of Texas at Austin, Texas A&M University, University of Houston (all campuses), Texas Southern University, Huston-Tillotson University, Prairie View A&M University, Rice University and Houston Community College

**Most Common Academic Programs**

Varies depending on department

**Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Since 1983

**Number of Internships per Term**

17 for summer 2009

**Duration**

Approximately 3 months (June through August)

**Hours per Week**

Most departments prefer full-time interns; however, some interns are going to school and are available to work part-time.

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

All departments, including Legal, Human Resources, Police/Public Safety, Engineering & Construction, Real Estate, Information Technology, Operations, Finance, Planning, Procurement, Infrastructure & Service Development, Communications & Marketing, Government Affairs, etc.

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

Some current employees were originally interns at METRO as far back as 15 years ago; also, several former interns work for other transit agencies

**Contact Information**

Karen Kauffman, Manager Equal Employment Opportunity/Organization Development  
Houston METRO  
(713) 739-6851  
[Karen.kauffman@ridemetro.org](mailto:Karen.kauffman@ridemetro.org)

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## **VIA Metropolitan Transit**

VIA provides transit services to San Antonio, Texas, and the surrounding area and has a small internship program, with positions available when required by an educational institution. Internships often work in the Public Affairs or Strategic Planning departments.

### **Type of Internship**

Marketing and Planning

### **Level of Educational Achievement**

Must be required by the school

### **University Recruitment**

No specific universities

### **Most Common Academic Programs**

Marketing and Planning

### **Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Formal procedures for interns adopted around 1993

### **Number of Internships per Term**

No certain number; departments identify a need for an intern when a student inquires

### **Duration**

Varies

### **Hours per Week**

Based on the requirements of the school

### **Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

Public Affairs, Strategic Planning

### **Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

No information provided

### **Contact Information**

Stephanie Thompson, Employment Specialist

VIA Metropolitan Transit

(210) 362-2247

[Stephanie.thompson@viainfo.net](mailto:Stephanie.thompson@viainfo.net)

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## **Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority**

GCRTA provides transit service to Cleveland, Ohio, and the surrounding area and has an internship program that works closely with the Legal Division and Human Resources.

### **Type of Internship**

Legal

### **Level of Educational Achievement**

Undergraduate, preferably junior or senior

### **University Recruitment**

Northeastern Ohio, including Cleveland State University, Case Western Reserve and University of Akron

### **Most Common Academic Programs**

Law, Human Resources and Business Administration

### **Duration**

Typically one year, but can be extended if student is willing and able

**Hours per Week**

At least 15

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

Legal Division, Human Resources

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

No information provided

**Contact Information**

George Fields, Manager

Employment and Compensation

Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority

(216) 781-4667

[gfields@gcrta.org](mailto:gfields@gcrta.org)

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**King County Department of Transportation**

King County DOT provides transit service to the King County portions of the Seattle, Washington, area and has a large internship program most commonly supporting work in the Planning, Information Technology and Engineering departments.

**Type of Internship**

Planning, Information Technology and Engineering

**Level of Educational Achievement**

Most commonly undergraduate and graduate, but also high school and post-graduate/fellows

**University Recruitment**

University of Washington, Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University; also advertise nationally through website

**Most Common Academic Programs**

Public Policy, Urban Planning, Master of Business Administration, Master of Public Administration, Engineering and Information Technology

**Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

At least 20 years

**Number of Internships per Term**

Total of 47 interns have been hired since January 1, 2003

**Duration**

Varies by department, often can last as long as intern is working on degree.

**Hours per Week**

Planning interns typically work 20 hours per week during the school year, and up to 40 hours per week during the summer.

Engineering interns typically work 8 to 16 hours to week during the school year, and typically work 24-32 hours during the summer.

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

Transit Service Planning, Special Transit Market Development Areas, Information Technology and Engineering

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

King County has hired several Planning interns and one Engineering intern during the last 13 years.

**Contact Information**

Ralph Cady, Senior Human Resources Analyst  
King County Department of Transportation  
(206) 263-4782  
[Ralph.cady@kingcounty.gov](mailto:Ralph.cady@kingcounty.gov)

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**Orange County Transportation Authority**

OCTA provides transit service to Orange County, California, and has an agency-wide internship program, offering approximately 120 internship positions throughout the year.

**Type of Internship**

Agency-wide college internships

**Level of Educational Achievement**

Available to freshmen through graduate students

**University Recruitment**

Tend to focus on local colleges and universities in Orange County

**Most Common Academic Programs**

Urban Planning, Civil Engineering, Business Administration and Organizational Development, as well as a range of other majors

**Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Over 20 years

**Number of Internships per Term**

OCTA has approximately 120 intern positions available throughout the year

**Duration**

Varies

**Hours per Week**

Maximum of 1,000 per fiscal year

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

All

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

No information provided

**Contact Information**

Jeanette Carr, Senior Compensation Analyst  
Orange County Transportation Authority  
(714) 560-5856  
[jcarr@octa.net](mailto:jcarr@octa.net)

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**Tri-County Metropolitan District of Oregon**

TriMet provides transit service to Portland, Oregon, and the surrounding area and has a predominantly summer internship program, most commonly working with Capital Projects, Marketing, Sustainability and Human Resources.

**Type of Internship**

Multiple-department college internships

**Level of Educational Achievement**

No requirements

**University Recruitment**

Varies depending on academic need

**Most Common Academic Programs**

Engineering, Environmental Sustainability, Marketing

**Length of Time Program Has Been in Place**

Over 7 years

**Number of Internships per Term**

Typically during summer months, varies depending on need

**Duration**

Approximately eight weeks

**Hours per Week**

Approximately 40 hours per week

**Area of Agency Where Interns Typically Work**

Capital Projects, Marketing, Sustainability, Human Resources

**Evidence of Career Success for Former Interns**

No information provided

**Contact Information**

Angela Burns-Brown, Human Resource Manager

TriMet

(503) 962-7505

[browna@trimet.org](mailto:browna@trimet.org)

## 2.6 FINDINGS

In an attempt to uncover all professional development programs with a focus on leadership relevant and available to the transit industry, TTI researched national professional development programs, programs provided by state DOTs and internships with transit agencies. Each group yielded meaningful results.

The national professional development programs proved more widespread than expected, having identified seven national sponsors, one regional sponsor and four universities offering continuing education to the transit industry. Of the four segments of the transit career spectrum, most of the national programs seem more oriented toward existing or newly promoted leaders and managers and to a lesser extent for those new to the industry and senior staff. National professional programs are the most thoroughly developed and respected, but also tend to be restrictive due to time and financial commitments, as well as lack of convenience with most programs offered on the East Coast. Nevertheless, the national professional development programs are the most relevant form of professional development with a focus on leadership for transit professionals.

The professional development programs with state DOTs are far less prevalent. Four relevant programs were found among state DOTs, most of which are conducted in conjunction with another sponsor or party. As with the national professional development programs, the state DOT programs tend to target leaders and managers more than those new to the industry and senior staff, but are less restrictive on professional experience required to attend. Even though state DOTs appear to be in a good position to provide professional development to the transit industry, the research for this study found that such programs are lacking among DOTs.

The research found several examples of internship programs sponsored by transit agencies, including five in Texas. This form of professional development attracts young people to enter the transit industry. Internships often lead to employment with a transit agency. Recent economic circumstances have placed some of the internship programs in peril.

Overall, this research identified several professional development programs for leaders and managers. DOT programs tend to provide more opportunities to those new to the industry. Additionally, internships provide a way for students to prepare for employment with transit agencies. The segment of the spectrum targeted the least is the senior staff category. Perhaps the programs for senior staff are lacking because of the assumption that this group has reached the apex of the industry and does not require as much professional development. However, for those senior staff members who desire to leave a legacy, a need exists to assist this group.

The following summary lists programs by category of sponsor and then by the sponsor.

**Sponsored by Transit Industry Associations**

APTA	Leadership APTA
CTAA	Course Preparation for Certification Exams
COMTO	Careers in Transportation for Youth TCRP Ambassador Program
SWTA	Transit Leadership Development 101 Transit Management and Paratransit Management
Women in Transportation Organization (WTO) Advancing Women in Transportation	Leadership Training Program
Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association <i>Jointly sponsored with PennDOT</i>	Pennsylvania Transit Institute <i>See Eno Transportation Foundation</i>

**Sponsored by National Training Programs**

National Transit Institute	Transit Academy Fundamentals of Transit Supervision Senior Leadership
Eno Transportation Foundation	Mid-Career Managers (New fall of 2009) Transit Executive Seminar Transit Governing Board Summit Pennsylvania Transit Institute (New fall of 2009)

## **Sponsored Directly by Transit Agencies**

Citibus, Lubbock	Management training program Transit Agency Internships
Ohio Department of Transportation	Transportation Certificate Program (3 courses) Transportation Certificate Program (weekends)

## **Sponsored by State Departments of Transportation**

Florida Department of Transportation	Professional Development Program
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	Professional Supervisor/Manager Workshops <i>See Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association</i>
Washington State Department of Transportation	Willamette University Leadership Training

## **Sponsored by Universities**

Iowa State University	Supervisory Skills and Techniques
North Carolina State University	Transportation Leadership Development
North Dakota State University	Principles of Transit Management
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	Fundamentals of Public Transit

## **Certification Programs**

CTAA	Certified Community Transit Supervisor Certified Community Transit Manager
APTREX	Certified Transit First Line Manager Certified Transit Control Center Manager Certified Transit Section Manager Certified Transit Division Manager Certified Transit Department Manager Certified Transit Executive Manager Certified Transit Board Member

Table 2 lists each of the leadership development programs identified in this research according to the career continuum. The programs under each category are generally in progressive order based upon the content of the program and the requirements for eligible participants

**Table 2. National Transit Leadership Development Programs by Career Continuum**

<b>Career Continuum</b>	<b>Sponsor/Leadership Development Program</b>	<b>Sponsor/Certification Program</b>
College Students	COMTO Careers in Transportation for Youth (CITY) Transit Agency Internships	Ohio Department of Transportation Transportation Certificate Program (3 courses)
New to the Industry	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Fundamentals of Public Transit National Transit Institute Transit Academy Citibus, Lubbock Management training program	Ohio Department of Transportation Transportation Certificate Program (weekends)
Aspiring Leader	Iowa State University Supervisory Skills and Techniques National Transit Institute Fundamentals of Transit Supervision North Carolina State University Transportation Leadership Development Florida Department of Transportation Professional Development Program North Dakota State University Principles of Transit Management SWTA Transit Leadership Development 101 Washington State Department of Transportation Willamette University Leadership Training Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Professional Supervisor/Manager Workshops COMTO TCRP Ambassador Program	CTAA Certified Community Transit Supervisor  APTREX Certified Transit First Line Manager  Certified Transit Control Center Manager  Certified Transit Section Manager
Current Manager	SWTA Transit Management and Paratransit Management Eno Transportation Foundation Mid-Career Managers (New fall of 2009) Pennsylvania Transit Institute Advancing Women in Transportation Leadership Training Program National Transit Institute Senior Leadership Eno Transportation Foundation Transit Executive Seminar APTA Leadership APTA	CTAA Certified Community Transit Manager  APTREX Certified Transit Division Manager  Certified Transit Department Manager
Senior Staff		APTREX Certified Transit Executive Manager
Board Members	Eno Transportation Foundation Transit Governing Board Summit	APTREX Certified Transit Board Member

### **3.0 SYNTHESIS OF INTERVIEWS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF TEXAS TRANSIT INDUSTRY**

This chapter summarizes interviews with representatives of the transit industry in Texas to identify the need and support for a leadership development program for rural and small urban transit managers. TTI researchers conducted the interviews to determine the perceived need and to identify opportunities for a leadership initiative for transit industry professionals in Texas. For this research, TTI prepared an interview guide to capture ideas about each of four levels of the continuum of professional development: young leaders interested in a career in public transportation, aspiring leaders just beginning to take on management responsibility, established managers, and senior staff.

#### **3.1 METHODOLOGY**

The Texas Department of Transportation, Public Transportation Division invited TTI to discuss the research for the transit leadership initiative before the Semi-Annual Meeting of managers from rural and small urban transit agencies January 21, 2009. TTI requested volunteers who wished to contribute by agreeing to an interview. TTI also asked for nominations of staff from agencies who represent the four levels of the continuum of professional development. TxDOT-PTN suggested additional candidates for interviews and included TxDOT staff serving as public transportation coordinators (PTCs) and representatives of transit associations. As of May 29, 2009, TTI completed interviews with 39 representatives of the transit industry.

Participation in the interviews was entirely voluntary. For each person nominated or suggested by others, TTI contacted the individual via telephone call and follow-up email to ask if the individual was interested in participating. If the person declined, TTI made no further contact.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) in the Human Subject Protection Program of the Office of Research Compliance, Texas A&M University, responsible for reviewing and approving human subject protocols, reviewed the research methodology for personal interviews. IRB granted an exempt application for the study. Each researcher participating in the interviews and preparing the study documentation had completed training and holds certification to conduct research on human subjects by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI).

The interviews were conducted in person (six of the 39) or by telephone. Each interview lasted about 60 minutes. The respondent was free to stop the interview at any time. No compensation was offered for the completion of the study.

Topics covered during the interview included the respondent's current transit industry position, education, professional experience in the transit industry, and exposure to professional development opportunities. Additionally, individuals were asked to identify qualities and skills for leaders and to suggest ideas for leadership development at each stage of the career continuum. In each interview, the researcher asked the individual if the transit industry in Texas needs a program for leadership development.

### 3.2 ABOUT THE INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Table 3 provides a general overview of the individuals that participated in the interviews.

**Table 3. Profile of Transit Industry Professionals Interviewed**

Participant Current Title*	Type of Transit Agency	Length of Time Current Position	Self Classification	Length of Time in Industry
General Manager	Urban	25 years	Senior Staff	33 years
Operating Manager	Rural	3 years	Senior Staff	27 years
Agency Director	Rural	25 years	Senior Staff	25 years
Agency Director	Rural	43 years <sup>1</sup>	Senior Staff	24 years
General Manager	Rural/Urban	10 years	Senior Staff	24 years
Department Director	Rural/Urban	5 years	Senior Staff	19 years
Department Director	Rural	6 years	Senior Staff	18 years
Assistant Agency Director	Rural/Urban	5 years	Current Manager	24 years
Transportation Manager	Rural/Urban	1 year	Current Manager	21.5 years
Department Director	Rural	17 years	Current Manager	20 years
Transportation Manager	Rural	6 years	Current Manager	20 years
General Manager	Urban	11 years	Current Manager	17 years
Assistant Director Finance	Rural/Urban	8 years	Current Manager	17 years
General Manager	Rural	11 years	Current Manager	14 years
General Manager	Rural	10 years	Current Manager	14 years
Director of Planning	Urban	1 year	Current Manager	14 years
Transportation Manager	Rural	6 months	Current Manager	11+ years
Agency Director	Rural	6 years	Current Manager	8 years
Transportation Manager	Rural	2 years	Current Manager	8 years
Department Director	Rural	5.5 years	Current Manager	7.5 years
Assistant/Coordinator	Rural	6 years	Current Manager	7 years
General Manager	Urban	10 months	Current Manager	7 years
General Manager	Urban	2 years	Current Manager	2.5 years
Agency Director	Rural/Urban	2 years	Current Manager	2.5 years
Agency Director	Rural	30 years	Aspiring Leader	35 years
General Manager	Urban	7 years	Aspiring Leader	14 years
Fleet Manager	Rural	6 years	Aspiring Leader	6 years
Office Manager	Rural	3 years	Aspiring Leader	3 years
Transportation Manager	Rural	1 year	New to Industry	1 year
Assistant/Coordinator	Urban	9 months	New to Industry	9 months
Department Director	Rural	1 years	New to Industry	1 years
Representative	Association	3 years	Association	10 years
PTC	TxDOT	20 years	TxDOT PTC	30 years
PTC	TxDOT	10 years	TxDOT PTC	18 years
PTC	TxDOT	15 years	TxDOT PTC	15 years
PTC	TxDOT	6 years	TxDOT PTC	15 years
PTC	TxDOT	2 years	TxDOT PTC	10 years
PTC	TxDOT	10 years	TxDOT PTC	10 years
PTC	TxDOT	10 years	TxDOT PTC	9 years

\* Titles represent generic description

<sup>1</sup> Responsibility for transit added to job responsibility during tenure.

Table 3 is organized to show that respondents from all levels of the professional continuum were represented in the interviews. The respondents also represent rural, urban and rural/urban transit agencies. Of the respondents, seven were identified as senior staff and all had over 18 years in the industry. Four of the seven senior staff represents rural transit agencies, two are from rural/urban agencies, and one is responsible for an urban agency. Seventeen of the respondents self-identified as current managers. Nine of the current managers represent rural agencies; four are from rural/urban agencies and four are responsible for urban agencies.

The respondents that identified as an aspiring leader have large differences in years in the industry. Two of the four aspiring leaders might be classified by others as senior staff, but chose to self-classify as an aspiring leader. This may reflect a perception of “leader” on a larger stage than the individual’s agency. The remaining two aspiring leaders have three to six years of experience in the transit industry. Aspiring leaders participating in the interviews were from rural and urban transit systems. The three respondents new to the industry each has nine months to one year of experience in the transit industry. Two respondents new to the industry come from rural agencies and one respondent comes from an urban agency.

TTI interviewed seven TxDOT public transportation coordinators, representing a geographic cross-section of the state. One respondent represented a transit association.

## **Education**

Education varied significantly among the respondents, as shown in Table 4. The education level attained by those who were interviewed ranged from high school graduates up to masters degrees. The various degree programs ranged widely from agriculture to teaching. The most commonly found degree programs were accounting, finance and general business administration.

While discussing education with the respondents, a common theme emerged. Respondents to the interview did not plan a career in transit and, therefore, did not pursue a specific degree program or training to enter the industry. Almost half of those interviewed did not have a bachelor’s degree and included senior staff, current managers and aspiring leaders.

**Table 4. Education Attainment and Corresponding Majors**

<b>High School Graduate</b>	1 respondent
<b>Vocational Education</b>	Real estate Food management Teaching certification
<b>Undergraduate Course Work</b>	Business (3) Education English General studies (2) Social sciences (4) Logistics Transportation
<b>Associates Degree</b>	Business administration (2)
<b>Undergraduate Degree</b>	Accounting (2) Agricultural education (2) Architecture Business (5) Communications/public relations Education Health, exercise and sports science Inter-disciplinary major (transportation, land use and environmental) Social sciences (3) Social work
<b>Graduate Degree Level Work</b>	Courses for masters in business administration (MBA)
<b>Graduate Degree</b>	City and regional planning Education MBA (4) Public management

TTI interviewers asked respondents to the interview which academic courses or experiences proved useful to managers in transit. Table 5 lists these courses.

**Table 5. Academic Courses Applicable to Transit Industry**

<p><b>Business Courses</b>  Accounting  Business math  Finance classes  Budgeting  Marketing  Human relations  Personnel management  Organizational management  Real estate (when building headquarters)</p> <p><b>Social Sciences</b>  Psychology  Sociology  Economics</p> <p><b>Communications</b>  Journalism  Public speaking  Group process and development  Promotional strategies</p>	<p><b>Technical</b>  Technical writing  Math  Engineering  Computer – Lotus  Geographic Information System skills</p> <p><b>Other</b>  Mechanical systems  Problem solving  Learning to listen  Learning to satisfy different personalities  Coaching – directing and motivating people  Social networking  Communicating with people of different backgrounds</p>
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**Internships**

TTI interviewers asked respondents if his/her transit agency sponsored an intern program to attract and train young staff interested in a career in transit. One agency sponsored a management training program, and three respondents participated in a transit specific internship or management training program.

**Transit as a New Career**

Interviewed individuals said they did not plan a career in transit; however, several did accept their first professional position in the transit industry. Out of the 39 respondents that participated in the interviews, 13 individuals said his/her first job was in transit.

For those respondents who began professional work in fields other than transit, previous work experience varied. Ten of the respondents interviewed moved into a transit position from other programs or departments within the same organization or agency. The types of organizations or agencies that provided these opportunities were cities, counties, councils of government (COG), social services agencies, development councils and regional planning commissions.

Other respondents to the interview came into transit from careers completely unrelated to transit. Sixteen respondents came into their transit career from another industry or job type. Several respondents to the interview moved into transit from business backgrounds, customer service related work, or teaching. The people with business backgrounds came from management, finance or accounting positions. One individual had worked in a family-owned business. The customer service experience included the medical field, sales, equipment leasing and general customer service positions.

## Existing Professional Development Programs

As documented in the previous chapter of this report, TTI identified several existing professional development programs that focus on transit leadership. During the interviews, TTI interviewers asked respondents to identify which programs they had attended and provide a general opinion on the program. Table 6 lists the existing programs and the number of respondents that identified participating in each program.

**Table 6. Existing Professional Development Programs**

<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Leadership Training Program	Advancing Women in Transportation	1
Leadership APTA	American Public Transportation Association	0
TCRP Ambassador Program	Conference of Minority Transportation Officials	0
Transit Executive Seminar	ENO Transportation Foundation	1
Senior Leadership	National Transit Institute	0
Transit Academy	National Transit Institute	0
Transit Leadership 101	South West Transit Association	1
Transit and Paratransit Management	South West Transit Association	12
Fundamentals of Public Transit	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	4
Principles of Transit Management	North Dakota State University	0
Supervisory Techniques and Skills	Iowa State University	0
Transportation Leadership Program	North Carolina State University	0

Additionally, respondents were asked if they had earned nationally recognized industry certification. Table 7 lists the certification programs.

**Table 7. National Certification Programs**

<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Certifications Offered</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
CTAA	Certified Community Transit Manager	9
	Certified Community Transit Supervisory Training	3
APTREX	Certified Transit Board Member	0
	Certified Transit Executive Manager	0
	Certified Transit Department Manager	0
	Certified Transit Division Manager	0
	Certified Transit Section Manager	0
	Certified Transit Control Center Manager	0
	Certified Transit First Line Manager	0

As shown in Table 6 and Table 7, the respondents to the interview have not participated in many of the leadership development programs that TTI identified during research for this project. The most popular program was the SWTA Transit and Paratransit Management course. Respondents to the interview who self-identified as senior staff had not attended a leadership development course in many years.

The main reasons given for not taking professional development classes or national certification programs were an unawareness of their existence, time, money and location. The rural providers especially expressed the fact that funding for professional development courses (including the travel, time off and cost of the course or certificate program) is prohibitive. Some participants were aware of the APTA, SWTA and CTAA programs but stated membership in the association was a prerequisite, and several transit agencies are not members of the associations.

Most of the participants in the SWTA Transit and Paratransit Management Courses rate the course as good to excellent. One respondent who had not taken the course stated that his employer wanted to see broader subject coverage in the classes. The respondent could not provide specifics.

The majority of the respondents that had taken and earned the CCTM and CCTS certifications rated the course preparation good and found the process to be rigorous. One respondent stated he was proud to have the certification. Yet, not all respondents agreed with the value placed on these certifications. Some respondents felt there was no real incentive to having the certification considering the time and money needed to obtain it. Another respondent believed the course material had not kept up with changes in the industry.

Opinions on the existing professional development courses and certification programs varied among the respondents. Table 8 highlights the responses given during the interviews regarding the existing professional development programs and national certification programs.

**Table 8. Strengths and Weaknesses of Existing Professional Development Programs**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Peer to peer	Learning only from books
Can learn from experiences of others	Some courses are not kept up to date
Takes me out of day to day job	Too short or too long
Ability to network	Too much information in too short of a time
Speakers with knowledge	Information presented too fast
Can get a bigger picture of industry	
Enjoy role playing/case scenarios	
Courses designed specifically for urban or rural transit agencies	

### **3.3 FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS**

The following sections summarize general findings based on the interviews.

#### **Industry Recognition**

In order to attract and retain top talent, the transit industry needs to stand out among career choices for young professionals entering the working force or experienced professionals looking to change careers. Often the first awareness of an industry comes during high school or college courses; however, not many secondary or university courses introduce students to the transit industry. During the interviews, the only college course identified as specific to transit was a logistics class. One respondent suggested colleges offer courses that focus on the need for transit and the benefits of transit for social studies or business students. Generally, current transit professionals all come into the industry through avenues other than academic preparation. In the transit industry today, many professionals find a career in transit by happenstance rather than a planned career choice.

Many respondents stated an opinion that the transit industry is not well known or highly valued in Texas. For this reason, many competent professionals may not be attracted to jobs in transit agencies. Another issue facing transit agencies is the ability to retain professionals. Respondents to the interview said transit professionals are often recruited out of transit to more lucrative positions in industries that have well known reputations and where personnel can see more support for the industry and opportunities for growth.

#### **Career Path**

Another observation made during the interviews was the lack of an acknowledged career path in the transit industry. If one aspires to become a manager or leader in the transit agency, what is the logical path of advancement and what training or professional development experience will help career growth? One respondent stated that he felt limited in his opportunities by the lack of information about the appropriate career path to advance in the industry. When questioned about the amount of training needed to advance at each level of the career continuum, the answers among the participants varied widely.

Additionally, many respondents noted a huge gap in experience. The new to the industry, aspiring leaders and current managers were all concerned about the large number of senior staff reaching retirement age. The fear of these groups was that a large amount of experience and knowledge would be lost when senior staff retire or leave the industry.

Senior staff also expressed a concern about succession in the industry and their legacy. Senior staff were concerned there were not enough managers trained and ready to assume leadership positions. All levels along the continuum were concerned with the industry losing professionals and the knowledge and skills of the senior staff.

## Lack of Communication

Along the lines of the lack of career planning in the industry, respondents noted a general lack of communication in the industry. This lack of communication comes in the form of knowledge not passed down by senior staff or human resources. Interview respondents stated many professionals in the transit industry need to enhance communications skills with employees, officials and the public.

## Need for Creative Visionaries

Respondents to the interviews expressed a concern that in the transit industry, people are told “this is the way we do it and have always done it” and everyone is expected to keep following the same course. The respondents believe there is a need for creative visionaries in the transit industry and leadership development would be a valuable asset for Texas. TTI interviewers asked respondents to think of a person who had provided significant leadership for transit in Texas, and then to identify the qualities or skills that individual had to be a leader. Table 9 lists qualities and skills that respondents identified.

**Table 9. Transit Leadership Qualities and Skills**

Qualities	Skills or Knowledge	Both
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patient</li> <li>• Rational, fair</li> <li>• Commands respect, not demands respect</li> <li>• Honesty, openness</li> <li>• Approachable</li> <li>• Innovative</li> <li>• Self starter</li> <li>• Ethical</li> <li>• Pave the way</li> <li>• Persuasive</li> <li>• Active</li> <li>• Vision, faith, courage</li> <li>• Willing to help</li> <li>• Very fair</li> <li>• Does not let ego get in way</li> <li>• Calm</li> <li>• Integrity</li> <li>• Perseverance</li> <li>• Respected in industry</li> <li>• Well rounded</li> <li>• Intelligent</li> <li>• Practical</li> <li>• Enthusiasm for job</li> <li>• Willing to take risks</li> <li>• Respectful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well informed</li> <li>• Sets examples</li> <li>• Communicates</li> <li>• Ability to manifest thoughts into action</li> <li>• Teacher – shares experiences</li> <li>• Tenure in industry</li> <li>• Understanding of how process works</li> <li>• Provide data to support</li> <li>• Understand financing mechanisms</li> <li>• Organizational skills</li> <li>• Came from the bottom and did not forget where he/she started</li> <li>• Background in management</li> <li>• Knows the rules and regulations</li> <li>• Understand differences between urban and rural</li> <li>• Works with diversity</li> <li>• Time management skills</li> <li>• Effectively delegates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People skills</li> <li>• Tactful</li> <li>• Collaborative</li> <li>• Open door policy</li> <li>• Diplomatic</li> <li>• Builds strong teams</li> <li>• Listens</li> <li>• Mentors</li> <li>• A part of all levels</li> <li>• Manage by walking around</li> <li>• Professionalism</li> <li>• Deal with politics</li> <li>• Ability to multi-task</li> <li>• Community involvement</li> <li>• Negotiator</li> <li>• Ability to react quickly as things happen</li> <li>• Vision of future</li> </ul>

Many of the interview respondents were looking for leadership in the transit industry to be more open-minded and innovative. The respondents wanted leaders that have the ability to see the big picture and think long term.

**Reinforcement of Processes**

Another theme reiterated throughout many of the interviews was the need for reinforcement of processes. At all levels of the transit professional continuum, the respondents desired more training and understanding of processes for funding, grants, procurement and regulations. Interview respondents also mentioned finance and accounting skills as a common need among managers in the industry to assist with the understanding and processing of funding and operations. Additionally, the respondents said this information should be presented at a level that could be understood and specific to the type of organization (i.e., urban and/or rural).

**3.4 NEED FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN TEXAS**

Almost all respondents to the interviews believed there was a need for leadership development for small urban and rural transit systems in Texas. Some of the many reasons given for the need for a professional leadership development program in Texas were as follows:

- Experience levels are very low and even “shocking”;
- Next 20-30 years will be very important for transit in Texas;
- New leaders need help for first two to three years;
- Always a need for transportation, so it is important for the industry;
- Many agencies in trouble due to a lack of leadership;
- Need to retain the knowledge of retiring leaders;
- Overall need for more knowledge and training in the industry; and
- Texas has a lot of human resources that could be brought into transit.

When asked to rate the importance of having a professional development program for transit leaders in Texas on a scale of one to ten (1 meaning “Not at All” and 10 meaning “Very Important”), all responses were seven or above (see Table 10).

**Table 10. How Important is a Program for Transit Leaders?**

Rating	Number of Responses
1 Not at All Important	-
2	-
3	-
4	-
5	-
6	-
7	1
8	11
9	12
10 Very Important	14

*Note: One person interviewed did not provide a response.*

The respondents were also asked if they supported the initiative by TxDOT-PTN, the University Transportation Center for Mobility, Texas Transportation Institute to develop such a program and approximately two-thirds of the responses were “yes, without reservation,” (see Table 11).

**Table 11. Support for Program Development**

<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>Response</b>
23	Yes, without reservation
9	Yes, but with some reservation
3	I am not willing to say
3	No, because I have some concerns
0	No, I am not supportive

*Note: One person interviewed did not provide a response*

When asked about their reservations, the nine positive respondents with reservations were mostly concerned about time, money and travel for training. One respondent’s concern was that the training should not take money out of operations. Many suggested computer or teleconference training courses (maybe even weekends). Some believe different courses should be developed to meet the needs of the transit professionals at each level along the continuum and not have just one generalized leadership development program.

Several respondents liked the idea of a leadership development program sponsored by a university with TxDOT-PTN. One respondent would like to see the program accredited but another voiced a concern that the training should not become a requirement or a certification that is required.

Two of the three negative concerns were about the possible conflict between TxDOT’s role as a regulatory and oversight agency and a new role to sponsor leadership development. One comment was a concern that TxDOT represents too much influence from highways and that a leadership development program would be best coming from an academic organization or an industry association.

### **3.5 FINDINGS AT EACH LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE**

As mentioned above, each respondent self-identified as being either new to the industry, an aspiring leader, a current manager, or a senior staff member. Additionally, TTI interviewers asked each respondent to identify the necessary knowledge and professional development needed for each level along the career continuum. Respondents new to the industry identified skills and strengths they brought into their current position, and interviewers asked senior staff questions regarding the legacy they will leave in the industry.

#### **New to Industry**

As discussed previously, most of the new to the industry professionals actually had previous work experience in another industry. New to the industry professionals were asked what skills and strengths they brought to the current position either from education or from previous work

experience. Existing strengths and skills from respondents included people skills, social work skills, new ideas for the position and business skills (i.e., accounting and management).

### ***Professional Development Suggestions for New to the Industry Professionals***

After identifying the skills brought into the transit profession, TTI interviewers asked the new to the industry professionals what type of professional development they needed in order to further their career in transit. Additionally, aspiring leaders, current managers and senior staff were asked what type of knowledge and skills new to the industry professionals needed to succeed in the profession.

### ***Introduction to Transit Industry***

Below is a summary of the suggested guidance needed for new to the industry professionals.

- History of industry;
- Industry terminology;
- Standard operating procedures;
- Regulations;
- Experience all aspects of operations;
  - Drivers;
  - Dispatch;
  - Maintenance;
  - Street supervision;
  - Management roles;
- Need to understand agency roles;
  - Local;
  - State;
  - Federal;
- Source of funding and how to use money;
- Cash flow process;
- Opportunities for advancement in transit industry;
- People skills;
  - Communications skills;
  - Customer service;
  - Telephone skills;
  - Dealing with people;
  - Cultural diversity;
- Computer skills;
- Writing;
- Complete safety/health training (Occupational Safety and Health Administration); and
- Public speaking.

## ***Types of Professional Development***

After the discussion about what new to the industry professionals should know or learn in order to advance in their career, TTI interviewers asked the respondents what type of professional development could be used to convey these skills and knowledge.

The responses given by the respondents vary widely. The most common answer in the interviews was mentoring and on-the-job-training. Both of these methods keep the professional development in-house and do not require the expense of travel or absence from the job in order to provide the training. Any professional would acquire on-the-job-training just by starting work, but the respondents specified the new to the industry professional should experience all aspects of transit. Mentoring is important because it allows the trainee the ability to see how things are done and they have a person to go to and ask questions when necessary. While most of the mentoring could be in-house, respondents wanted to see the creation of a statewide mentoring program that allows new industry professions to be mentored by professionals at different agencies throughout the state to highlight differences in urban and rural environments and different management styles.

Other respondents believe creating a “basic transit course” would familiarize the new to the industry professional with transit. The curriculum would focus specifically on the transit skills and knowledge referenced above. Additionally, it was suggested to create a statewide “new leaders” training that goes around to different agencies and organizations after a one- to two-day orientation conference. This type of professional development should include information that would help the new to the industry professionals create a career path program to guide them in the transit industry by allowing the individuals to see all aspects of transit in different settings. One respondent specifically liked the training provided at the TxDOT-PTN Semi-Annual Meeting that allowed the trainees to get out of the office to meet new people and network.

Still others believe the professional development provided to new to the industry professionals should be consistent. In order to maintain consistency, both video and computer-based training were suggested as possible training methods. In addition to being consistent, video or computer-based training would also allow the agency to save on travel and time away from the office. This type of training would be best suited for standardized industry information but this should be a supplemental training along with the mentoring and networking because these were defined as the most effective training tools by the respondents.

### **Aspiring Leader**

Aspiring leaders should have the base skill set that new to the industry professionals possess; therefore, leadership professional development for aspiring leaders should be different and more advanced than for new to the industry professionals. Below are the skills and knowledge that respondents believed aspiring leaders should possess or attain in order to become leaders in the transit industry.

### ***Transit Related Knowledge and Skills***

- Organizational management skills;
  - Performance evaluation;
  - Budgets;
  - Planning;
  - Administration; and
- Grant writing/management.

### ***General Knowledge and Skills***

- Personnel management skills;
  - Mentoring skills;
  - Supervisory skills;
  - Delegation;
  - Diversity training;
  - Conflict resolution;
  - Employment law;
  - Performance evaluation;
- Communication at all levels;
  - Supervisors;
  - Subordinates;
  - Public;
  - Local and state officials;
- Taking ownership;
- Innovative ideas;
- Customer service;
- Handling emergencies;
- Time management; and
- Presentations.

### ***Aspiring Leader Development***

Aspiring leaders mentioned similar responses on professional development methods as new to the industry professionals. As with the new to the industry professionals, aspiring leaders suggested professional development begins with on-the-job-training and mentoring. Some respondents believed this was best because the aspiring leaders learned the specifics of their organization having to travel for training and could see results from observed actions.

On-the-job-training could include placing the aspiring leader in a basic supervision position that allowed them to make decisions for employees that report to them. Another on-the-job-training suggestion was to create case studies for the aspiring leaders such as project proposal or procurement projects. Role playing activities in the agency could also help develop aspiring leaders. Additionally, respondents mentioned cross training in all departments to experience supervisory issues among the different aspects of the transit agency.

Networking was very important for aspiring leaders. Networking allows the aspiring leader to develop contacts around the state and the industry to assist them with answering questions and ability to find new opportunities. Networking also allows aspiring leaders to talk with other professionals that can share different experiences and promote new ideas for the aspiring leaders. Several respondents mentioned the TxDOT-PTN Semi-annual Meeting as a place to network and learn.

A combination of networking and on-the-job-training can be achieved by allowing aspiring leaders to visit other agencies. This would allow the aspiring leader to observe a different operation and make new contacts.

Additionally, interview respondents suggested formal courses to teach aspiring leaders both technical transit knowledge and general skills. The course should develop all aspects mentioned above and necessary skills and knowledge for an aspiring leader. Several respondents believed this course could be taught at a remote location or could be video-based or computer-based, as long as the message was consistent; however, this does not follow the repeated theme of face-to-face mentoring and networking needs for these developing professionals. One respondent suggested training to develop managerial skills by participating in existing courses available for registration.

### **Current Manager**

Many of the necessary skills and knowledge for current managers listed by respondents was similar to that of aspiring leaders. The overlapping list of skills and knowledge was likely because aspiring leaders were being prepared to become current managers and the need for continual development of current managers. Current managers may stay at the “current manager” level for many years before being considered senior staff; therefore, on-going professional development for the position may be necessary.

#### ***Transit Related Knowledge and Skills***

- More knowledge of process;
- Contract management;
- Operations;
- Additional training in business;
  - Finance;
- Budgeting;
- Decision-making;
- Funding formulas;
- Federal apportionment requirements;
- Grant requests;
- State and federal regulations;
- Intelligent transportation systems;
- Transit database management;
  - Data analysis;
  - Outside reporting;
  - Performance interpretation;

- Procurement;
- Interaction with other regional entities;
- Knowledge of planning; and
- Legislation process.

### ***General Knowledge and Skills***

- Prioritize;
- Organize;
- Delegator;
- Computer skills;
- Effective writing;
- Communications;
  - Public officials;
  - Personnel;
  - Public speaking;
- Research capabilities;
- Need time management;
- More personnel training;
- Staff development training;
- Human resource skills;
- Discipline;
- Consistency; and
- Supervisory/management classes.

### ***Current Manager Development***

Interview respondents suggested various methods of preparation for current managers. While most of the suggestions were the same as the previous two levels on the continuum, a few different suggestions came at the current manager level.

First, as with the previous two continuum levels, suggestions such as mentoring and formal professional development classes (on-site, video-based and computer-based) were mentioned. Interview respondents specifically mentioned mentoring “at a high level” or with senior staff members. Networking and on-the-job training are necessary for current manager development.

The first suggestion that was different from the new to the industry and aspiring leaders was the idea that current managers should have some specific formalized education or certification. The first suggestion was that current managers should have at least a bachelor’s degree or maybe even a master’s degree. Several respondents mentioned specific existing professional development courses, specifically SWTA classes that current managers should use for development. Additionally, tests and certifications such as the CTAA format were suggested for current managers. One respondent specifically believed that current managers should have “rigorous” training and sit for tests and certifications.

When discussing the formal professional development for current managers, interview respondents repeated the idea of teaching specific knowledge such as reports, grants systems,

procurement, equipment management, human resources and management courses in finance and accounting. Some respondents specifically mentioned courses for current managers should reinforce skills. Currently, managers find these skills by attending as many conferences and meetings as possible. Unfortunately, many managers report that it is very hard to get time outside the office to pursue these opportunities.

One respondent believed that current managers need to learn skills through structured courses as well as everyday exercises. This respondent believed formal courses for current managers must focus on management tools such as managing finances, managing time, managing people, managing performance standards and learning how to market transit. Current managers need a broader focus beyond just the day-to-day operations.

## **Senior Staff**

When asked about preparations for senior staff, the respondents that answered noted there were special skill sets that senior staff need at this stage in a career. The responses to the skill sets of the senior staff mostly focused on their ability to mentor and communicate effectively. These skills were probably considered most important for senior staff to be able to pass along their knowledge. As mentioned earlier in this report, one of the biggest concerns in the transit agency is the loss of senior staff and the knowledge they have attained during their transit careers.

### ***Skills and Knowledge for Senior Staff***

- Know how to mentor;
  - Stay available to staff;
  - Approachable;
  - Know entire business;
  - In-depth knowledge;
- Communications;
  - Local officials (city, county, MPO);
  - Political skills;
  - Personnel; and
- Labor retention.

The responses regarding the necessity to reinforce professional development for senior staff were divided. Some respondents believed that senior staff should already know everything they needed to know in their position. Some respondents also believed senior staff may not participate in professional development because the senior staff was set in their ways.

One interview respondent stated “learning never ends and should be continuous across all levels of transit careers.” Another respondent believed senior staff should focus less on operational issues and more on government relations. Senior staff should be able to cross diverse lines and communicate with all levels of people. A challenge for many senior staff is keep current with changing technology. Senior staff must be willing to learn new things and keep up with what is going on in the industry.

TTI interviewers asked senior staff respondents if they had spent time thinking about how they were influencing new leaders in the industry. Each respondent believed he or she does have influence over new and developing leaders in transit. A couple of the senior staff members believed it was their role to develop future leaders in transit. One respondent created a position specifically to allow for mentoring opportunities because it was important for senior staff to keep less experienced staff members growing. One respondent had created manuals in hopes of passing along knowledge to the new leaders; additionally, this respondent mentored regularly through staff meeting exercises. Only one respondent had created a succession plan for his/her position. Another senior staff respondent hoped that a replacement was hired at least six months before he/she retired, believing that it was not possible to select your own successor, as that should be the job of the governing board.

Interviewers also asked senior staff respondents what type of professional development programs could help them at the senior staff level. Responses varied but many focused on learning how to effectively mentor and pass along their knowledge. One respondent suggested a program to teach senior staff members about staff development and personnel growth. Another aspect of professional development that senior staff respondents wanted was a guide to help them think about succession planning. One respondent mentioned that succession planning could be valuable if it helped senior staff identify what they needed to think about when planning for a successor. The value of succession planning could also come from helping to establish a career ladder in transit for future leaders.

### **3.6 CONCLUSIONS**

The results of the interviews for this synthesis show there was support for a transit leadership development program in Texas. Many respondents were concerned with the lack of knowledge in the field and many more were concerned there was a lot of knowledge that would be lost when senior staff members retired or left the industry. Respondents to the interviews believed if a transit leadership development program was introduced in Texas, the industry may be able to attract new talent.

#### **Leadership Development**

The respondents received from the interviews for this project, overwhelmingly would like to see a leadership development curriculum developed for Texas. As of right now, there is an immediate need for succession planning for senior staff, leadership development for aspiring leaders and current managers, career planning for young leaders, and programs for internships/mentorships.

#### **Succession Planning**

During interviews, many respondents expressed a concern over the knowledge that would be lost when senior staff retired or moved from the transit industry. Additionally, senior staff wanted to know how to prepare for their departure and how to ensure their legacy would continue with the organization they were leaving. Senior staffers need assistance in developing programs to pass

along their knowledge and ensure a lasting legacy. These types of modules may focus on how to mentor current managers and aspiring leaders or documenting guidelines and procedures.

### **New to Industry**

Several new to the industry professionals said they were thrust into a transit position without knowledge of industry terminology, funding sources, regulations, the agencies involved, differences between rural and urban areas and the history of the industry. A module to introduce new professionals to the industry should most likely be a generic introduction to the industry and not get too deep into the day-to-day business of transit. Some of the responses to the interviews suggested that a specific program about federal funding might be of interest to more seasoned professionals, too.

### **Internships/Mentorships**

Very few respondents knew of internships that are available in transit and even fewer actually participated in an internship during their college career. Another opportunity is to develop a formal internship program that could be adopted by urban and rural transit agencies. An internship gets a college student in the door and allows for hands-on training (or on the job), which many respondents believed was the best professional development they received. TxDOT-PTN could look into establishing a best practices guide for internships that would provide the foundation for internships at transit agencies across Texas.

Along with internships, mentorships are a great tool for professionals that are new to the industry. As with internships, the hands-on training is the best and the mentee is allowed to learn from a seasoned transit professional who can guide the new professionals through the ins and outs of the industry.

### **Academic**

As previously mentioned, many college students enter into industries straight from college. Students learn about various industries and businesses by college curriculum, internships and solicitations directly from business entities. One opportunity may be to develop an academic course that introduces college students to the transit industry, the needs of transit and the future of transit. This type of course could be offered at each campus if a professor was interested in teaching it or could be offered occasionally at the larger universities. If that is not possible, the subject matter could be developed as an online specific course that colleges could offer for credit.



## **4.0 RECOMMENDATION: TEXAS TRANSIT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE**

In addition to the research documented in the previous chapters, TTI also discussed priorities for a Texas transit leadership program with TxDOT-PTN and an advisory committee. TxDOT-PTN named the advisory committee of seven current transit general managers from small urban and rural transit districts in Texas. The managers on the advisory committee include members of the board of directors for the Texas Transit Association (TTA).

The purpose of the advisory committee was to discuss the findings of the research and to counsel TTI and TxDOT-PTN on the format and content of a Texas Transit Leadership Initiative. The committee met in two four-hour workshops to recommend the actions to implement a successful leadership development program.

### **4.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The advisory committee adopted guiding principles for the TTLI:

- TTLI is a comprehensive and deliberate effort to identify, develop and support public transportation leaders in Texas throughout their entire careers.
- TTLI is created and sustained through a collaborative effort between TxDOT and public transportation providers in Texas.
- TTLI is more than an academic program. While formal training is critical to successful leadership development, this initiative will also emphasize various companion strategies, such as internships, counseling, mentoring, “in place” training tools and forums designed to enhance and apply leadership skills to resolve critical issues. Deliberate combining of formal training with these companion strategies is critical to the success of the program. Rather than act as a set of discrete activities, the combination of formal training and other strategies creates the synergy for a successful program.
- TTLI will create a resource environment for transit agencies individually and collectively to address their leadership needs – a “One Stop Shop for Leadership” concept.

### **4.2 PRIORITY STRATEGIES**

Consistent with the TTLI Guiding Principles, the advisory committee agreed to prioritize five strategies to work in concert as elements of a successful leadership development program.

1. Develop and deliver a Texas Transit Leadership Seminar;
2. Sponsor Leadership Challenges forums to enhance and apply leadership skills to resolve critical issues;
3. Encourage a Peer Program incorporating peer-to-peer assistance, internships and mentoring;

4. Assess existing training programs that emphasize interpersonal communication, facilitation, problem solving and consider incorporating in the TxDOT-PTN training program; and
5. Develop a Transit Management Certificate Program to encourage students to consider a career in transit and to provide an opportunity for aspiring leaders to earn a certificate.

Another task for the advisory committee was to identify possible sponsors for the priority strategies.

- TxDOT-PTN and TTI agreed to take the lead on the Texas Transit Leadership Seminar.
- TxDOT-PTN offered to develop the Leadership Challenges and agreed to research the possibility of providing a three-day training for collaboration, consensus building, and dispute resolution.
- The members of the advisory committee agreed that Texas Transit Association would commit resources to develop a Peer Exchange Program. TTI offered to assist in defining the elements of such a program.
- TTI proposed to develop a Transit Management Certificate Program through another UTCM project.

The remainder of this chapter documents the work of TTI to encourage implementation of the three priority strategies assigned to the Institute.

### **4.3 LEADERSHIP SEMINAR**

The top ranked project was delivery of a transit executive leadership seminar specifically directed to current managers for small urban and rural transit (as opposed to transit systems in large urban areas). The advisory committee emphasized that the program had to be about leadership (not supervision) and must be designed for the unique needs of leaders in small urban and rural transit agencies.

The objectives of the Texas Transit Leadership Seminar are as follows:

- Understand the difference between supervisor, manager, and leader;
- Assess individual leadership styles;
- Reinforce leadership skills;
- Stimulate thinking about critical issues for the transit industry; and
- Encourage discussion and exchange of ideas among peers.

The advisory committee suggested the following concepts for the initial seminar.

- Participants attending a seminar will represent both urban and rural transit districts.
- Generally, the participants will be individuals who are currently general managers, deputy or assistant general managers, and department managers of a transit district.
- Each seminar “class” size will be small; therefore, multiple seminar sessions may be required to include all who may be interested in participating.

- The participants in the seminar will be selected using a process defined by a committee comprised of representatives of TxDOT-PTN and peer transit agencies.
- TxDOT- PTN will fund the majority of seminar costs to encourage participation and to reduce the burden on smaller transit agencies with limited resources.

TxDOT-PTN authorized TTI to conduct research to identify sources for a transit executive leadership seminar specifically directed to managers of small urban and rural transit. TTI researched:

- National sponsors for professional development programs for the transit industry with a focus on leadership;
- State departments of transportation; and
- Programs by national transit agencies.

TTI followed up with state DOT (peer agencies to TxDOT) to make inquiries about a transit executive seminar for small urban and rural transit managers. TTI contacted states that have a large number of small urban and rural transit providers, provide state funding to support small urban and rural transit, and use performance measures to allocate the state funds. TTI identified one state DOT that either had previously or planned to sponsor a seminar to advance leadership in small urban and rural transit systems. The state agency was the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Bureau of Public Transportation.

PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (PPTA) sponsored the Pennsylvania Transit Executive Seminar in October 2009 at the Penn State Conference Center in State College. General managers and executive directors from small urban and rural transit systems attended. The Eno Transportation Foundation conducted the education program that included the two-day seminar in October followed by three one-day sessions held concurrently with PPTA or PennDOT meetings during the following six months. One TTI researcher attended the Pennsylvania Transit Executive Seminar in October as an observer.

TTI selected, with TxDOT-PTN approval, the Eno Transportation Foundation's Center for Transportation Leadership to develop and deliver a seminar similar to the program delivered for PennDOT.

The first Texas Transit Leadership Seminar will be October 17-20, 2010, in Austin, Texas. Eno Transportation Foundation's Center for Transportation Leadership will develop and deliver the curriculum. The class of 25 selected participants includes current leaders of rural, urban and rural-urban transit systems across Texas. The October session will be followed by a one-day seminar in January 2011. Each of the participants will also participate in a self-assessment of leadership skills and four hours of personal coaching with the Eno instructors.

#### **4.4 PEER PROGRAM**

The Peer Program is an important element of the overall Texas Transit Leadership Initiative. By providing opportunities for sharing solution-based experiences, the Peer Program seeks to recognize, support and promote good leadership development.

## **Purpose**

Providing peer assistance through the Peer Program will help transit providers to develop and sustain critical leadership skills and knowledge. The Peer Program seeks to:

- Assist transit providers by providing a forum for exchange of ideas and experiences focused on finding solutions to a specific issue or challenge.
- Facilitate dialogue on crosscutting public transportation topics that will be of relevance to transit providers statewide.
- Sponsor a formal mentoring program to provide opportunities for experienced transit leaders to support the careers of other transit professionals.

## **Scope**

The Peer Program could be comprised of one or more of the following examples of peer initiatives.

### ***Peer Exchange***

A peer exchange is responsive to the individual expressed needs of transit providers and involves the exchange of information on a specific issue. A peer exchange may take place in one of several formats.

A peer exchange could be a small group discussion combined with a site visit. Generally, a transit provider contacts the peer exchange coordinator to request technical assistance on a specific issue. For example, a transit provider could ask for peer assistance to review the preliminary plans for a new transit center. One or more peers are selected to participate in the peer exchange based on good practices in the particular topic/area. A site visit takes place and a small group discussion of peers focuses on the identified issue or problem at a location of mutual agreement.

Another format for a peer exchange is by electronic communication (email) through a peer-to-peer network. The network could be similar to a list serve, allowing a transit provider to present a question asking for information or requesting suggestions on how to address a problem. All transit providers who have signed up on the list serve can read the emailed question and provide pertinent feedback. For example, a transit provider might post a question to the peer-to-peer network asking about best practices for frequency of service on a downtown circulator. Electronic communication could also facilitate a clearinghouse to post pertinent technical information or reference material on a particular topic.

### ***Peer-to-Peer Training***

The peer-to-peer training is designed for representatives of transit providers that have implemented innovative practices or solved a particular challenge to participate in an expert peer panel or “roundtable” discussion to share noteworthy practices on topic areas such as transit operating, planning, financing, or policy.

However, the training does not require the audience to be in the same room. Webinars and other types of network training will allow peers to provide training to a large audience. The key to the success of the training is a peer expert who shares a particular experience and discusses best practices and resolution of problems. A good topic for a peer-to-peer training might be a review of good fleet management practices with measurable results in higher miles between road calls.

### ***Mentoring***

Mentoring refers to a relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable transit professional (the mentor) helps a less experienced or less knowledgeable person (the protégé) to develop as a leader in transit. Mentoring is a tool to nurture and grow leaders. Mentoring can be an informal practice or a formal program. Mentors and protégés can be from the same organization or from different organizations in the Texas transit industry.

The following are the characteristics of a good mentoring program:

- Mentors demonstrate, explain and model by example. Protégés observe, question, and explore.
- The mentor’s job is to promote intentional learning, which includes leadership development through methods such as instructing, coaching, providing experiences, and advising.
- Both failure and success are powerful teachers. Mentors, as leaders of a learning experience, certainly need to share their “how to do it so it comes out right” stories. They also need to share their experiences of failure; i.e., “how I did it wrong.” Both types of stories are powerful lessons.
- Leaders need to tell their stories. Personal scenarios, anecdotes and case examples, because they offer valuable insight, must be shared.
- Development matures over time. Mentoring – when it works – taps into continuous learning that is not an event, or even a string of discrete events. Rather, it is the synthesis of ongoing events, experiences, observation, studies and thoughtful analyses.
- Mentoring is a joint venture. Successful mentoring means sharing responsibility for learning. Successful mentoring begins with setting a contract for learning around which the mentor, the protégé and their respective managers are aligned.

The steps to establishing a good mentoring program by the Texas Transit Association will include at least the following:

1. A statement of goals and objectives;
2. Recruitment for both mentors and protégés;
3. A training curriculum for all mentors and protégés; and
4. A monitoring and evaluation process.

## **4.5 TRANSIT MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

The Transit Management Certificate Program addresses needs identified by transit stakeholders during the interviews with transit industry representatives (see Chapter 3.0). Stakeholders told TTI researchers that public transportation systems in Texas need quality managers and administrators to serve as leaders for an industry that is increasingly important for the social and economic health of rural and small urban communities. However, individuals entering the public transportation industry generally lack transit-specific education and management skills. There are no university academic programs in Texas that address public transportation as a career field. In addition, there is a need to provide continuing education for personnel already working in public transportation.

Public transportation administration is becoming increasingly complex. There is a need for leadership programs to reinforce and improve management skills for strategic planning, communications, organizational development, financial management, and performance measurement.

A successful Transit Management Certificate Program can provide the leadership training needed for the current generation of public transportation managers in Texas and provide needed academic preparation to attract career professionals into the industry in the future.

During the research summarized in Chapter 2.0 of this report, TTI identified three university-affiliated transit certificate programs. One program is a Certificate of Public and Social Service Transportation at Wright State University in Ohio. The program is offered for undergraduate students with junior year standing or higher. The second program is the Transit & Community Transportation Management Certificate Program at the Atkinson Graduate School of Management, Willamette University, in Washington State. This program is a two-week course open to participants from public agencies responsible for planning, developing or operating transit services. The third program is the Transit and Paratransit Management Certificate Program sponsored by the Westgate Center for Management Development at the Eberhardt School of Business, University of the Pacific. The course is offered in 10 one-day sessions for current managers, department heads and new hires with little or no formal management training or experience in transit.

TTI proposed to continue developing the priority strategies for the Texas Transit Leadership Initiative by requesting UTCM funding for a Transit Management Certificate Program. The funding will be used for the following tasks:

1. TTI will review each of the peer certificate programs to identify best practices and lessons learned.
2. TTI will discuss the peer review findings with TxDOT-PTN and the committee of transit industry stakeholders to identify the objectives for a Transit Management Certificate Program in Texas. TTI will also seek the counsel of representatives from the academic departments and schools at Texas A&M University on the most important elements of a successful certificate program.

3. Working in cooperation with TxDOT-PTN, stakeholders, and the academic departments and schools, TTI will develop the proposal for a certificate program and present the program for approval by all appropriate cognizant agencies and academic departments.
4. TTI will facilitate delivery of the first Transit Management Certificate Program.

The objective of this project is to deliver the first Transit Management Certificate Program no later than January 2011. One of the decisions to be made as a part of the work program will be whether to develop a program for undergraduate students, graduate students, and/or a continuing education program for mid-career professionals. The content and format of the proposal for a certificate program will depend on decisions made during the course of this project.



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