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December 2015

President's Report

By Duane Ratermann, PE
Knox County, Illinois



I am always thankful when my employees get to spend the Christmas holiday with their families instead of dealing with a winter weather event. The "El Nino" weather phenomenon seems to be playing out as forecasted. In west central Illinois we had an early snow fall at the end of November, but our snow plows have been parked since then with temperatures well above normal.

Unfortunately the Pacific Northwest and the Gulf Coast states have been inundated with rainfall. In the past week, most of Alabama has received 5-10 inches of rain with isolated areas as much as 14 inches. Many county crews along the Gulf Coast were working over the Christmas holiday dealing with flooded and washed out roadways. Let's keep our fellow NACE members affected in our thoughts and prayers as we enter into the New Year.

The first week in December, Diane and I attended the County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) Meeting, held in conjunction with the 121st Annual Meeting of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) in Monterey, Cal. The activities included a golf outing, various CEAC committee meetings, and the installation of new CEAC Officers. The December conference kicked off the 50th Anniversary of the California Loyal Order of Dedicated Servants or CLODS. CLODS is made up of the past presidents of CEAC, if they are deemed worthy.

CLODS traditionally hosts an afternoon barbeque, this year held at the Monterey County Fairgrounds. The barbeque included a bit of a seafood since it was in Monterey. It was truly an honor for Diane and I to participate in the CLODS barbeque as many of their members continue to be very active in NACE.

I want to thank the membership of CEAC for hosting us, and a special thanks goes out to Mike Penrose, 2015 CEAC President, for coordinating our travel arrangements and making sure I was where I needed to be when I needed to be there. Recognition also goes to Julie Bueren, NACE Western Region Vice President, Patrick DeChellis, retiring NACE Director for Cal., and Scott McGolpin, newly appointed NACE Director. And congratulations to Matt Machado, the new CEAC President for 2016, as well as the other CEAC officers.

While I was in Cal., Congress passed a new Federal Highway Bill, the FAST ACT, which President Obama signed on December 4. The FAST Act is a five-year fully funded bill which will provide us much needed stability and predictability as we plan our transportation improvement projects. It also increases funding for locally owned infrastructure in several ways. There are still many details of the FAST Act to be determined but let us celebrate this victory now.

We should all be proud of the work that went into the passage of the FAST Act. NACE appreciates the efforts of Legislative Committee Chair Richie Beyer and his committee, as well as Brian Roberts; Jessica Monahan, NACo Associate Legislative Director; and the NACo Transportation Steering Committee.

Thanks for all your support and hard work this year in making NACE the great association that it is. I look forward to seeing many of you in Tacoma in April. I wish all of you a prosperous and successful 2016. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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October 2016

President's Report

NCPP and Pavement Preservation Heading in the Right Direction

By **Brian Stacy, PE**
Pierce County, Washington



It's long been the philosophy of my home county that maintenance (M), operation (O), and preservation (P) is the heartbeat of our program.

Certainly other aspects of our business are important, such as improvements (I) and administration (A). But if we're unable to address the basics of our program (MOP), everything else struggles to achieve balance and ultimately becomes unsustainable.

That's why I was so encouraged with the resounding message that was provided at the National Pavement Preservation Conference held in Nashville, Tennessee, this month. Although I was only able to participate for a brief time, the overwhelming support for "Preservation" of our transportation assets was clearly evident. For those of us tracking this, what once was a topic rarely discussed

amongst congestion relief, nonmotorized improvements, or even safety improvements, now preservation is firmly seated at the table and gaining the attention it deserves.

Larry Galehouse, the Director for the National Center for Pavement Preservation, did a great job teeing up the pavement preservation dialogue with the 700 attendees. It was interesting to get the Federal perspective from Walter (Butch) Waidelich, Executive Director of the Federal Highway Administration. We're all encouraged to know there will be ongoing funding opportunities for preservation projects.

It became evident at the conference that convincing engineers and maintenance staff that preservation is worthy of our attention was simply preaching to the choir. What we really needed was a plan to convince our elected bodies that it's a critical element to our programs. From an asset management strategy, our infrastructure program will not be sustainable if we're unable to fund preservation. Our priorities must be educating our electeds, being as transparent as possible, and ultimately developing trust with those in charge so we can stay the course.

Think about it: in many cases we'll be challenged with convincing an elected commissioner or councilperson to invest in the preservation element of our program that may not show its value for 7-10 years. They may have a term of 4 years, so they could be out of office. It's understandable that their tendencies may be to invest in the capital projects now, resulting in ribbon cuttings, positive exposure, and ultimately votes.

It goes without saying that this is a monumental task for some county road officials. And without having the necessary level of confidence and trust with the ultimate decision makers, your desire to invest in preservation may be challenged.

Our job is to create a compelling story, compile the appropriate support data, and interact routinely with our decision makers to have a real chance at earning their trust and funding approval.

I'm very encouraged with the direction Preservation is going and applaud the efforts of NCPP!!

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Early Bird Registration Discount Ends February 26



NACE 2016

INNOVATE • CONNECT • INSPIRE

We invite you to check out the **NACE 2016** site if you haven't!

The Washington State Association of County Engineers (WSACE) promises you'll experience the best of Tacoma and Pierce County!

On the site, you'll find about everything you need: the preliminary schedule, hotel and travel information, session topics, technical tours, networking opportunities, things to do in Tacoma and more.

Act now to reserve a room at the host hotel, The Murano, as space is limited. The Courtyard also has a NACE block.

Register for a **Technical Tour on Tuesday!**

Narrows Bridge and Cruise

Remember being amazed your first time studying Galloping Gertie? Take a scenic boat ride aboard the Emerald Star on the Puget Sound to tour the Tacoma Narrows twin suspension bridges that stand today, connecting Tacoma to Gig Harbor.

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Feel free to contact us if you have any questions: nace@naco.org or 202-393-5041.

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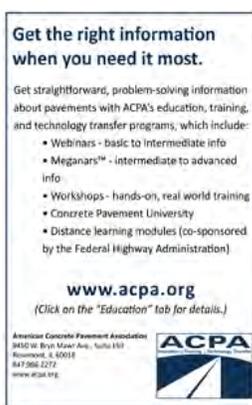
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News from NACE South Central Region

By Brian Keieleber, PE

Buchanan County, Iowa



I will start out with Happy New Year! We get wrapped up with all the events around us and lose track of what is truly important. The weather here has been wonderful; 40's and 50's, which has allowed us to catch up on some of the projects we didn't get to earlier. It has been an excellent year for funding. Here in Iowa we saw a 10 cent per gallon fuel tax increase, the first one since 1989. That coupled with the new Federal Highway bill should create some optimism until we look at the fact that we haven't recovered what we lost due to inflation.

I started spending the increase, before receiving the funds, on a backlog of bridges. In addition to the standard cast-in place-slab and concrete boxes, railcar bridges, and concrete beams, we constructed a Press Brake Tub Girder Bridge, an Ultra High Performance Concrete PI Beam Bridge, and two buried soil structures. One of these we placed on the existing timber piling cut off below the ground line where they are solid. They don't decay where they don't get exposed to the air. We have known this for years, but I have never incorporated the old piling into the structure before.

Many of us have old timber pilings that have seen their life and need to be addressed. This is an economical solution. I am hiring local contractors with little to no bridge experience and constructing some of these structures. My inspection staff gets frustrated at times, but I truly believe as County Engineers it is our job to teach proper construction of structures. If even half of the contractors develop into reputable bridge contractors, it will be a very successful endeavor. If not I will have created more gray hairs for my inspection staff.

Better ways of constructing substructures are being developed. GRS is being used, but many designers are more comfortable with some steel supporting the bridge. A couple of counties here in Iowa are trying a hydraulic driver attached to an excavator to place H piles. We are also looking at helical piling for bridge abutments and repairs. The bottom line is we cannot sit still or we are moving behind.

I recently spoke at the Iowa County Engineers Conference in Ames. I addressed some of the proposed rules, including Waters of the US, and how important it is that we speak out. An example is you can be fined \$372,000 for tearing down Barn Swallow nests with eggs instead of waiting until the eggs hatch and the birds grow up and fly away. Currently in Iowa we need to cut the trees in the winter to allow for the Northern Long Eared Bat. It would be a very bad scenario to remove the bridges in the winter that are to be replaced in the summer. The answer we hear is prevent them from nesting on the bridge. Who is more important the birds or the people? We must be vocal on our opinions.

The rules developed "Inside the Beltway" often do not reflect our values. It's your job to get involved in NACE. If we are NOT AT THE TABLE, WE WON'T BE ON THE MENU.

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Nominate an Exceptional Engineer / Road Official



Tim Zahn, PE (left)
Sangamon County, Illinois

2014 Urban County Engineer
of the Year



Richie Beyer, PE (center)
Elmore County, Alabama

2014 Rural County Engineer
of the Year

Does your state have a County Engineer who ...

- Leads by example?
- Rolls up his shirt sleeves?
- Actively sources new technologies?
- Does more with less?
- Influences laws or guidelines?

Or a Project/Program Manager who works below the county engineer or head manager.

Annually NACE Presents 3 Awards at the Annual Banquet:

- Urban County Engineer of the Year
- Rural County Engineer of the Year
- Project / Program Manager of the Year.

These awards recognize meritorious achievements which help create a new vision for road transportation systems.

Nominations close on January 15, 2016.

NACE extends our sincere appreciation to Awards Chair Richard Spraggins, PE, and the committee for reviewing the application packets and selecting the recipients.

View the [Awards Site](#) for the guidelines and nomination forms.

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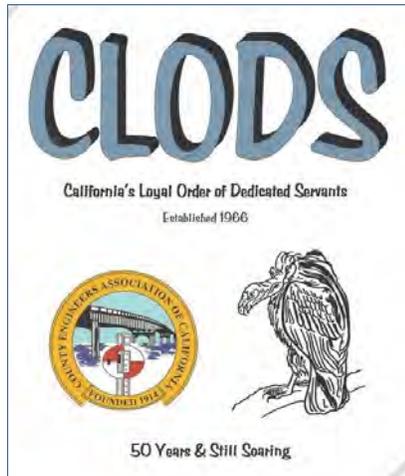
The CLODS – 50 Years and Still Soaring

By Julie Bueren

Contra Costa County, California

I would like to wish everyone a very happy and prosperous 2016!

One exciting happening in California next year is that **California's Loyal Order of Dedicated Servants**, known as the CLODS, are celebrating their 50th anniversary. You may wonder who the CLODS are, so let me provide some history of this esteemed organization.



For over a century, California's County Supervisors have met in annual session to discuss their mutual problems and seek possible solutions from one another. This was the origination of the California State Association of Counties (CSAC). In the beginning, each Board of Supervisors would also include their County Engineer to provide facts, figures, and technical assistance.

The engineers eventually organized their own association, the County Engineers Association of California (CEAC) to CSAC to assist their elected boards on issues of statewide importance.

With each passing year, more and more presidents of CEAC retired until quite a reservoir of past presidents was accumulated. On January 26, 1966, a group of past presidents formed the "California's Loyal Order of Dedicated Servants" or CLODS. The original officers of the CLODS were the founding fathers Bill McIntosh and Ed Hanna. At the time of their inception, the CLODS consisted of the 22 past presidents of CEAC who were alive.

Each succeeding CEAC President has been inducted into the CLODS at the end of their term starting with Bruce McClain from Monterey County in 1966. Mike Penrose from Sacramento County became the 80th CLOD at our 2015 annual meeting in Monterey County.

So how we have 80 CLODS with 22 original and 1 each year after for 50 years? That adds up to 72 in my book. In the early years of the CLODS, the members saw fit to recognize and anoint as CLODS three "Civilian" members. This term later became "Honorary CLODS". These are individuals from industry or other associations that have made an impact on CEAC. The number of Honorary CLODS has grown to 8, bringing the total number of CLODS to 80.

Under the original leadership of Bill McIntosh and Ed Hanna, the CLODS created a number of CEAC traditions that celebrate the lighter side of the association, including awards and their famous CLODS barbecue which many NACE Presidents have had the good fortune of attending.

Five CLODS have served as NACE Presidents: John Lambie in 1960, Bill McIntosh in 1967, Don Head in 1986, Budge Campbell in 1994 and Phil Demery in 2011.

The CLODS mascot is the Condor and they have an interesting system of assigning bird names. Working CLODS are called Pigeons and retired CLODS are called Coots. Some CLODS have been given special names befitting their character and special duties such as Old Crow, Bull Condor, Peacock, Mocking Bird, Carrier Pigeon and Roadrunner.

Several CLODS serve as officers of the CEAC, filling the roles of Treasurer Emeritus, Historian, Newsletter Editor and Parliamentarian. The CLODS are a great resource as mentors for our membership. They help connect the organization to its past, and their involvement ensures a continuity of excellence in the future.



As the CLODS celebrate their 50th Anniversary in 2016, they continue to support a strong relationship between CEAC and CSAC from a technical, advisory and supportive role.

This November at the annual meeting in Monterey, the CLODS were presented with a CSAC Circle of Service award. Mehdi Sadjadi, CEAC Treasure Emeritus and Peacock (notice his tie) accepted the award on behalf of the CLODS from CSAC First Vice President Richard Forster.

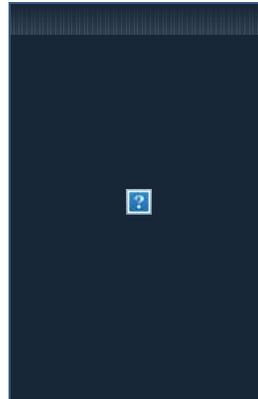
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Tire Buyback Gains Traction in Storied Florida County

By Charles Taylor

NACo Staff Writer NACo Staff Writer



Sebring, Fla. is known for fast cars. It's home to the "12 Hours of Sebring" endurance race, held annually at Sebring International Raceway in Highlands County.

But during eight hours in Sebring on a recent Saturday, vehicles inched along rather than sped, as their drivers waited to drop off scrap tires at the county's first tire buyback. The county was paying \$2 per tire—for a load of up to 25 tires—to address a persistent problem: illegal dumping of tires, which County Engineer Ramon Gavarrete called a "huge" nuisance.

"We have hundreds of miles of road that are not maintained... so people just go and dump tires everywhere," he said.

The event, held on Nov. 7, far exceeded expectations. The county was prepared to accept 10,000 tires, with \$20,000 to pay county residents. "We honestly thought that was going to be enough," he said, "but boy, were we wrong. It ended up being almost twice as much."

All told, 17,695 tires were dropped off, and the payout was more than \$35,000. To put that in perspective, Montgomery County (Dayton), Ohio has been holding tire buybacks for the past three years. In its first year (2013), the county—with a population nearly five times that of Highlands County's 98,000 residents—collected 15,488 tires. The Ohio program also pays \$2 per tire, but only for up to 10 tires. (It won a NACo Achievement Award in 2014.)

Gavarrete said the annual cost to the county of picking up illegally dumped tires averages about \$38,000, so the expense proved to be a bargain. The money paid out above \$20,000 will be replenished from the county's solid waste trust fund, he added. Discarded tires are a problem nationwide. In 2013 according to the Rubber Manufacturers Association, about 75 million scrap tires were stockpiled in the United States. In 1990, there were 1 billion.

Recycling and reuse has contributed to the decline, according to the EPA, but almost 25% of scrap tires end up in landfills each year. About 84% of them come from passenger cars; 15% from light and heavy trucks, states an Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries fact sheet. Recycled rubber from scrap tires is used in the manufacture of new tires, as rubberized asphalt and for equestrian mats and playground surfaces. A contractor for Highlands County will chip the tires into material that can be used for landfill lining instead of rocks.

County commissioners approved the tire buyback in May of this year. At the same time, Gavarrete said, they authorized funding for a sheriff's deputy devoted to enforcing the county's dumping laws. Though the buyback was a success, he says there were some glitches along the way that will need to be addressed before doing it again. Florida law limits the number of tires that can be hauled without a permit to 25, and some people brought more than that. But they weren't turned away.

"The decision was made to go on and take them because if we would have turned them away, they would have just gone and dumped the tires everywhere again," he explained. "Next time, we're going to have to advertise the penalties, and we're going to have deputies out there enforcing the law." The event was scheduled from 8 am to 2 pm, but Gavarrete said lines began to form as early as 5:30 am, and the last truck left the landfill's scale house at 4 pm. "It was successful—17,000-plus tires; that's definitely successful," he said, "and we're going to do it again."

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CEAO and CCAO Conferences—Over 850 Attendees!

The County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO) joined the County Commissioners Association of Ohio (CCAO) in hosting their 2015 Annual Winter Conference in Columbus on December 6-8. The event brought together over 850 of Ohio's county officials and their staff members for sessions highlighting best practices as well as innovative projects and procedures.

As part of its annual business meeting on December 7, CEAO was proud to welcome several distinguished guests. State Senator Bob Peterson (Senate District 17) and State Representative Ryan Smith (House District 93) were honored as Legislators of the Year for their commitment to assisting their county engineers. "Senator Peterson and Representative Smith are aware of the pressures county engineers face maintaining county roads and bridges in today's economic world," said CEAO Executive Director Fredrick B. Pausch.

Lifetime membership awards were given to Timothy J. Piper, retired Allen County Engineer; David A. Brunkhorst, retired Ottawa County Engineer; and Terrence R. Recker, retired Putnam County Engineer.

This year's CCAO / CEAO Annual Winter Conference featured 70 exhibitor companies, over 40 educational sessions, and great representation of Ohio's diverse counties. CEAO would like to thank all conference attendees and supporters for helping to make this event a success year after year!

CEAO Award Winners



Defiance County Engineer Warren J. Schlatter was recognized as County Engineer of the Year. He will also be Ohio's NACE Rural County Engineer of the Year nominee.



Maggi Shaqra, Administrative Assistant to the Hocking County Engineer's Office, was awarded the County Employee of the Year.

CEAO 2016 Board Members



Officers Seated (L-R): Paul Gruner, Montgomery County Engineer, second vice president; Mark Zimmerman, Seneca County Engineer, President; Chris Bauserman, Delaware County Engineer and NACE Former Leader, first vice president; and James Wiechart, Mercer County Engineer, Treasurer.

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Clinton County, Iowa, Finds a Stabilized Road Resurfacing Solution

Clinton County, Iowa, engineer Todd Kinney, PE, was looking for a solution for 250th Street, a two mile aggregate surfaced road that serves mainly residential and agricultural property. The road connects to two county farm-to-market paved roads and US Highway 30. The 2010 traffic count was 70 ADT (average daily traffic). The road is relatively flat with a traveled way width of 26 ft and typical shoulder and ditch cross sections.

In 2009, a large sand quarry opened and began operations. 250th Street is the only access road to the quarry site. The quarry generated an additional 20-30 trucks per day in comparison to the other daily traffic load of normal residential traffic and agricultural vehicle traffic.

Due to the large increase in truck traffic, the road became difficult to maintain to the level of service expected by the mixture of road users. Clinton County considered constructing an aggregate base and paving the road with hot mix asphalt, or increasing the aggregate replacement cycles and placement densities to support the increased truck traffic loading. The traffic count did not warrant paving and the funding was not available for a paving type of improvement.

Clinton County considered constructing an aggregate base and paving the road with hot mix asphalt, or increasing the aggregate replacement cycles and placement densities to support the increased truck traffic loading. The traffic count did not warrant paving and the funding was not available for a paving type of improvement. The increased truck traffic on the road section was already requiring the county to increase aggregate resurfacing cycles and increase road grading activity.

Clinton County began researching for an intermediate level of service between a paved road surface and a typical aggregate surface that would support significant truck traffic on a year-round basis. Clinton County selected Team Laboratory Chemical Corporation's Base One as a treatment method to increase the level of service without the cost of paving. The existing aggregate surface was scarified and then blade mixed with a Base One/water mixture. Additional water was also added to reach optimum moisture for compaction.

The treated mix material was bladed to proper slope and then compacted with rubber tired rollers. Three additional 1-1/2 in. lifts of new aggregate were placed, stabilized, mixed, and compacted in the same manner. All construction work was completed using existing county labor and equipment. The finished stabilized road was then treated with calcium chloride for dust mitigation. "The Base One stabilization method was selected because it offers a higher level of service than a 'normal' aggregate road on a year-round basis, without the cost of paving the road," states Kinney. "The Base One stabilization of the road has eliminated the need to reapply aggregate to the road over the last four years.

The road only requires blading twice a year—once in the spring and once in the fall. Ten maintenance blading cycles per year have been eliminated due to the stabilization of the road," says Kinney. Based on the unstabilized annual maintenance cost of the road and the current annual maintenance cost of the Base One stabilized road, the Base One stabilization has a rate of return of 8-10 years. The Base One stabilization is providing the county long-term maintenance cost savings, as well as providing a better year-round driving surface to the traveling public.

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LPESA Fall Meeting Breaks Attendance Record!



Almost 100 attendees, a record number, participated in the Louisiana Parish Engineers and Supervisors Association Fall Meeting on September 17 in Lake Charles at Calcasieu's Prien Lake Park. A social sponsored by Material Resources, Inc., of Port Allen was held the night before the meeting.

Registrants were welcomed by LPESA President Tim Marks, followed by Shannon Spell, PE, a Police Juror from Calcasieu Parish. Spell engaged the crowd with his humorous description of his double role as an engineer and as an elected official.

George Swift of the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance reported on the extensive industrial expansion planned and ongoing in southwest Louisiana. While a boon to the local economy, the accelerated activity creates a challenge on both transportation and housing infrastructure.

LPESA then welcomed Roland Dartez, the Executive Director of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, who gave attendees an excellent 2015 Legislative session update. While transportation funding and other legislative issues such as insurance fared well in the 2015 session, Roland reported that the gubernatorial election leaves much in doubt for 2016 and beyond.

Bridge Program Update

Representatives of the Bridge Inspection and Maintenance and Bridge Design Sections from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) gave updates on the Plan of Corrective Action to meet all of the FHWA Performance Metrics for the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS). LPESA has been involved with DOTD for several years on the bridge inspection and compliance program, providing input and feedback to the Department on compliance related issues.

Several parishes participated with LTAP and DOTD in the pilot project to collect bridge file and rating information and LPESA has provided assistance to promote the compliance program activities. David Miller, PE, DOTD Bridge Maintenance Administrator; Paul Fossier, PE, Bridge Design Engineer Administrator; and Steven Sibley, Bridge Inspection Engineer, provided updates and answered questions.

Miller and Sibley mentioned that special District meetings are being scheduled by the DOTD District Bridge personnel to update parish representatives on their request for information on specific bridges. Each parish should have received the letter detailing the required information and this will be addressed in the upcoming meeting.

Overweight Loads and Permit Programs

A popular and lively session was the Panel discussion on Load Permits, Regulations and Enforcement. Moderated by Bossier Parish Engineer Butch Ford, the panel consisted of Tammy Anderson of LADOTD, David Templeton of the Louisiana State Police, and Russell Craig of Bossier Parish. The many challenges that the parishes face in trying to regulate and manage the use of local road and bridge networks came to light during this thought-provoking discussion.

Technical Presentations

- Joint Use Permitting & Land Use Mitigation
- Flood Plain Management & No-Rise Certification
- ACROW's Prefabricated Modular Steel Bridges,
- Internal Curing, an Often Overlooked Element of Concrete Construction
- Thin Lift Asphalt Pavements
- Shoulder Stabilization Technique for Local Roads

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Capitol Hill Update

FAST Act Beneficial to Counties

Congress has accomplished something unheard of for over a decade: It passed a long-term surface transportation reauthorization bill.

After a year of short-term extensions of MAP-21, federal highway and transit programs now have a long-term policy framework and funding through the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (H.R. 22). President Obama signed it on Dec. 4.

The fully funded five-year measure represents a compromise between the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform (STRR) Act of 2015, which passed the House in November, and the Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act, which passed the Senate in July.

While many county priorities were included in both the STRR and DRIVE acts, the FAST Act responds to NACo's call for the inclusion of preferred policy reforms and funding from each of the proposals. Rather than going forward with a partially funded six-year bill, as had been previously been proposed, Congress ultimately provided a five-year authorization with sufficient funding to keep the Highway Trust Fund solvent through its duration.

The FAST Act addresses two other NACo priorities, by renewing the Export-Import Bank and removing the ban on municipal bond financing for projects receiving aid through the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act.

About the FAST Act

The FAST Act authorizes \$280 billion in spending out of the Highway Trust Fund for highway and transit programs. This works out to an average of \$56.2 billion per year, an annual increase in investment of almost \$4 billion over current law. The bill reflects a compromise between the two chambers' reauthorization proposals and includes a number of county priorities. They include:

Long-term certainty: A five-year bill, the FAST Act will provide counties the long-term certainty they need in order to plan, fund and deliver transformative transportation projects.

Funding for locally owned infrastructure: The act increases the amount of funding available for locally owned infrastructure by increasing funding for the Surface Transportation Program and making an additional \$116 billion available for county-owned highway bridges. This additional funding more than repairs the 30 percent decrease in funding that occurred under MAP-21.

Increased local decision-making: The act acknowledges and uses the value of local decision-making by sub-allocating a great share (up to 55 percent by FY 20) — or roughly \$28 billion — of the Surface Transportation Program to local areas and local governments.

Funding for off-system bridges: The act protects set-aside funding for off-system bridges, which provides over \$776 million annually for bridges that are primarily owned by counties and other local governments.

Funding for rural and urban public transportation systems: The act continues funding for urban and rural public transportation formula grants. In addition, the bill increases funding for the Bus and Bus Facilities formula grant program and creates additional competitive bus grants programs that will provide discretionary funding to further support counties' bus purchases and bus facility investments.

Provisions to streamline project delivery: The act builds on the reforms of MAP-21 aimed at expediting and streamlining project delivery. Specifically, the bill establishes a new pilot program to allow states to substitute their own environmental laws and regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and requires an assessment of previous efforts to accelerate the environmental review process, as well as recommendations on additional means of accelerating the project delivery process.

Reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank: The act reauthorizes the Export-Import Bank, which is designed to help American businesses compete in the global marketplace by financing exports of various goods and services.

Removing limitations on the use of tax-exempt municipal bonds: The FAST Act removes a provision from the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) that prohibits tax-exempt bonds from being used in conjunction with WIFIA



funding. This improves flexibility for counties and boosts their ability to finance key water infrastructure projects.

Reprinted from NACo County News, December 14 issue.

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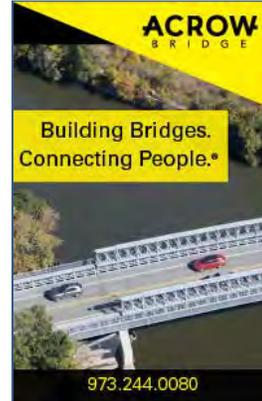
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The Numbers Crunch: Caltrans Says if You Build New Roads, Traffic will Come

We're well into the busy holiday travel season, so many Californians are getting a bumpy reminder of how decrepit and crowded many of our highways are.

Many might be frustrated that the governor and legislature haven't been able to cut a deal during a special session on transportation, though the repair backlog is estimated at \$78 billion for local roads and another \$59 billion for state highways.

But what if Caltrans is questioning the whole logic of building more roads to relieve traffic congestion? You might think that after reading a policy paper that the department is linking to on its website.



Construction workers wrap up work on the Fix50 project in Sacramento in June 2014. Randy Pench Sacramento Bee file

Constructing new roads and adding lanes doesn't ease congestion for very long because traffic quickly increases to fill the new capacity, concludes the policy brief from the National Center for Sustainable Transportation.

It's a theory called "induced travel," basically the transportation version of the law of supply and demand. Adding capacity cuts travel time, thus lowering the "price" of driving and leading to an increase in driving. In the paper, UC Davis professor Susan Handy writes that increasing a road's capacity by 10% is likely to increase vehicle miles traveled by 3%-6% in the short run and 6%-10% in the long term, basically offsetting any gains.

In her review of the research, Handy also cautions that new and widened roads don't lead to net increases in jobs or economic activity – not what industry and labor groups pushing for highway construction want to hear.

And she warns that a rise in vehicle miles traveled would substantially increase greenhouse gas emissions.

So does the California Department of Transportation endorse the paper? The answer is "yes" – with some explaining. The official line is that "solid science" shows that expanding roads does lead to more driving, so the department is first fixing existing roads and only building new roads "strategically." Caltrans also touts its "sustainability" push that encourages bicycling, walking and mass transit.

Caltrans' policy, according to a spokesman, is for any increase in vehicle miles traveled to stay below the state's population growth. Its goal is to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 15% from 2010 levels by 2020.

But according to its own counts, that number is rising – by nearly 3% through September compared to last year – and has risen every year since 2008 except one.

Its policy, however, does keep Caltrans in tune with Gov. Jerry Brown's crusade to put California at the forefront of adapting to climate change. That includes reducing carbon pollution spewed by cars and trucks, as well as increasing renewable and clean energy.

Brown, who is headed to Paris for the United Nations summit on global warming, suffered a defeat on his most recent climate change bill when Big Oil forced him to spike a key provision that would have set a target of reducing gasoline use by 50% by 2030.

Yet if Caltrans does manage to cut vehicle miles traveled, gasoline purchases will surely decline as well. By being part of the climate change team with the governor, Caltrans could eventually have fewer projects to oversee and less work to do. A government agency not expanding its empire – now that would be a new one.

Vehicle Miles Traveled on California State Highways (billions)		
2008	176.32	down 3.5%
2009	178.29	up 1.1%
2010	178.80	up 0.3%
2011	176.84	down 1.1%
2012	177.26	up 0.2%
2013	180.56	up 1.9%
2014	185.32	up 2.6%
2015	143.67	up 2.8%

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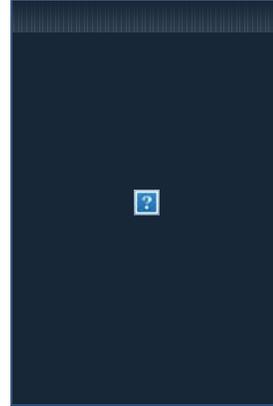
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Is Your Employee Development Program Too Focused on Hard Skills at the Expense of Soft Skills?



Technical staff need technical skills. In fact, for individuals holding professional licenses and certifications, technical-focused CEUs are often required to maintain their designations. So the need to obtain this type of training is absolutely critical.

And yet, this training often comes at the expense of something that is equally important, but often overlooked: soft skills. Sure, some of these skills are taught in A/E/C firms – project management comes to mind. But often this type of training is reserved for a certain level of employee, and not all employees.

So what, exactly, are soft skills?

According to Oxford Dictionaries, they are “Personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.” Contrast this with hard skills like learning how to use a software program, typing, interpreting engineering tables, or welding steel.

Here are primary soft skills needed by A/E/C professionals:

Communication – This is a big one, and includes both speaking and writing. Do your professionals look strangers in the eye, or look down? Can they stand in front of an audience – whether two people or two hundred – and speak without sounding nervous? Likewise, do they write sentences filled with technobabble or industry jargon? Or can they write well, in an easy-to-understand language? Do they use too many abbreviations and acronyms in email, or write out what they are trying to get across? Do they hide behind email instead of making a phone call or meeting with someone in-person?

Interpersonal – Maybe they have communicational skills down pat, but can't effectively relate to those they are interacting with. A component of this is known as Emotional Intelligence (EI), which is understanding how your words and actions impact others as well as the importance of empathy. On one hand, it is understanding and controlling your emotions. On the other hand, it is being able to interpret and respond to the emotions of others – co-workers, clients, prospects, vendors, etc. Was EI part of your schooling? I didn't think so!

Research – Research isn't just for marketing departments, but for any and every professional. With “The Internet of Things” connecting just about everything these days, research is a critical soft skill, whether researching a person you are about to meet with, learning about their firm or institution, looking for new products or techniques, or just about anything else under the sun. We can all Google, but do our research skills go much deeper?

Project Management – Perhaps the most obvious of soft skills in the design and construction industry, project management is about a lot more than managing an architectural, engineering, or construction project. In fact, project management skills can be applied to most of what we do on a daily basis. A project manager may be in charge of running a specific project, but team members are often managing their own work, as well as the work of others. Developing a new process or specification requires project management skills, as does overseeing development of a proposal or presentation.

Problem Solving and Critical Thinking – The A/E/C industry is highly complex, and requires advanced problem-solving capabilities on a daily basis. But how are you to go about researching and identifying the issues that may be at the root of a problem, much less applying the critical thinking required to determine the ideal solution(s)? “Make it happen” or “just do it” don't count as effective training.

Team Approach – The cliché “there is no ‘I’ in team” really is appropriate. In this industry, we are continually working in teams to win projects, design the work, and construct the deliverable. Many parts are moving at any given time within this complex world. No one person can do everything – by the very nature of the business we need a team-based approach, one where every team member carries his or her weight and all team members trust one-another to play their part. But so much of our upbringing reinforces the “I” over the “We” mentality, so a lot of professionals (of all ages, by the way) don't truly trust and embrace the concept of “team.”

Attitude – This soft skill ultimately determines whether or not a person can succeed with other soft skills. And unfortunately,

this is extremely difficult to teach. Sure, you can talk about having the right attitude, you can ask people to read books about positive attitudes, but this is truly up to each and every person. But when you can share lessons learned from positive – and negative – attitudes, and how they have impacted projects and relationships, you can create a powerful training tool.

Innovation – Sometimes it seems like innovation is being shoved down our throats with an “innovate or die” mentality. But clients are demanding innovation – not just by their words, but by their actions. When they tell us that they want it faster and better, but aren’t willing to pay more, they are essentially requiring innovation on our parts. But how many of our staff members understand innovation concepts? How does one even begin to innovate? Heck, what is innovation in the first place?

Listening – Have you ever been in a conversation with someone who was constantly talking – even cutting you off before you were finished? (You would never do that, right?) Or seemed like they weren’t paying attention to what you were saying because they were thinking of what they would say next? Those people have poor listening skills. Years ago I heard a simple rule, one that I continually reference – we have two ears and one mouth, so we should listen twice as much as we talk. But how many of your staff members have ever been coached to improve listening skills? How much valuable information do they miss because they simply aren’t listening?

Time Management – Although time management relates to project management, it is also its own beast. How many of us find ourselves sitting around with nothing to do? No, we don’t have enough time in the day, week, month, or year. But there are myriad tools and resources out there that could help us better utilize our time. And hey, one of my favorite time management tools is delegation. Micro-managers aren’t good time managers (nor team players). Do your staff members understand that there’s probably a better way than they are doing it now?

Organization – My email box is cluttered. Sometimes I feel like an electronic hoarder. And while my office can seem disorganized, I’ve seen some that make my office look extremely neat by comparison! Organization is physical and digital. Your company probably has standards for organizing project files, but are those standards followed? Are they archaic? And how do you and your co-workers organize anything that isn’t specifically-related to a project?

Professionalism – This is related to attitude, but is also different. I’ve known people who had great attitudes, but came across as unprofessional – or vice-versa. The way you dress. The way you speak. The way you shake a hand. The way you handle yourself with co-workers, clients, and prospects. The way you write your emails. The way you organize your files or manage your projects. There’s a professional way to do things, and many unprofessional ways to do them as well! Professionalism is closely intertwined with many other soft skills.

Hygiene – Sad but true: hygiene is a soft skill. If you are well-dressed but have bad breath and stinky clothing, people won’t remember what you are wearing. And I have to tell you, nothing freaks me out more than the men’s room at a networking event – watching “gentlemen” do their business and walk out of the restroom, bypassing the sink. Yuck! Do they understand what a hugely negative impression they create? I sure don’t want to shake their hands....

Etiquette – How do you make a proper introduction? Which fork do you start with at a dinner event? Manners are related to etiquette. Hopefully our parents or grandparents taught us proper manners, but in a world where people eat on the go, families spend less time together at the dinner table, and a plate and couch seem to be the new norm for eating a meal, sometimes we need a refresher.

As you can see, there’s a whole big world of soft skills out there – and this list certainly isn’t conclusive.

Now think of all the hard skills training that you and your coworkers have received over the past few years. Compare that with the soft skills training received during the same period. Hard skills are less valuable unless backed by competent soft skills. If your firm held a monthly soft skills training program, you couldn’t even get through all these topics in a year. Furthermore, some – like communication – are so broad that there are critical sub-skills. For communication those skills are speaking, presenting, writing, and even listening.

Hard skills are important to the success of your firm – and to your own success as an individual. But they aren’t mutually exclusive. In fact, in this industry they are hugely interdependent upon one-another. If you are lacking in any of the areas identified above, by all means seek out training opportunities. While you can’t go to a one-hour program and expect to master a certain soft skill, you have to start somewhere. Maybe your company can launch a series of soft skills lunch-and-learn programs. Maybe you could teach one or two sessions where you excel, and a few other co-workers could teach a session or two where they have a broad skill-set. Maybe you need to bring in consultants to help. Or maybe you and your co-workers need to go to third-party training to learn about these skills.

It doesn’t matter how you and your colleagues get this training, what is most critical is that you get this training. At a minimum, read a book. Watch a webinar. Do something, anything, to enhance your soft skills. The future success of your firm, and your career, depends upon it!

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Report from National League of Cities Explores the Future of Mobility and Technology



A November 6 report by the National League of Cities (NLC) explores trends in mobility and technology in cities and identifies what cities can do to move seamlessly and efficiently into the future of mobility. **City of the Future: Technology and Mobility** explores how transportation will change with coming technological disruptions, draws on knowledge from leading experts in the field and delves into city and regional transportation planning documents from the 50 most populous U.S. cities—as well as the largest cities in every state—providing an unprecedented look into what is happening next.

"Transportation is critical for our cities. This report is part of a multi-year research project that focuses on five different factors affecting cities: technology, economics, climate resilience, culture and demographics," said National League of Cities CEO and Executive Director Clarence E. Anthony. "By exploring mobility and the impact technology is having on how we all get around, NLC is highlighting specific issues that will help cities anticipate changes in the urban landscape and prepare for the future."

The report finds widening gaps between innovation in the private sector, the expressed preferences of citizens and the visions of city planners regarding transportation investment. The mobility environment in cities is rapidly shifting—primarily due to technology—and this will impact cities' future land-use decision-making, as well as infrastructure planning. Specifically, a majority of cities do not have concentrated efforts to prepare for new transportation innovations. Though half of the cities surveyed have explicit plans for new highway and infrastructure construction and maintenance, the majority of cities are not taking into account the effect of driverless technology or private transportation network companies.

"Our collective thoughts on the future of transportation have moved from Deloreans to driverless cars in what seems like the blink of an eye," said Brooks Rainwater, director, NLC Center for City Solutions and Applied Research. "With the mobility environment rapidly changing, cities are central and leading the effort toward better, more seamless and equitable transportation systems."

Forecast for 2020

There will be extensive demographic and workforce changes that will impact transportation networks, such as changing commuting choices, office location and workspace changes, decreased vehicle miles traveled and an increase in contract jobs.

More states will establish infrastructure banks, paid road models will be on the rise in cities and there will be an increase in public-private partnerships for mobility projects.

There will be more modal and transit options available to cities, with optimized bus lines and integration of apps and fare payment systems.

Transportation network companies will be the main modes of personal and freight transportation in cities of all sizes, and there will be an increase of driverless cars and electric cars on the roads.

Forecast for 2030 and Beyond

Urban areas will continue to grow, commuting patterns will change and rush hour will be dispersed over longer periods of time.

A national infrastructure bank and other public/private financing options will change the way transportation projects are evaluated.

Public transportation will begin to go driverless and cities will see a reduction in single occupancy vehicles. Bike communizing will become more attractive, though electric assist technology, and high-speed rail systems will be constructed in the east and west coast travel corridors.

Additional modes of transportation, such as inner-city rail and air travel, will expand and there may also be first-class amenities on some public transportation services as well.

Read the [full report](#).

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Connected Snow Plows in Michigan will Offer GPS Location Information



The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has introduced new technology that allows the public to see where snow plow trucks are plowing or salting on state trunklines, including interstates, state routes, and US highways. Along with its usual complement of about 80 plow trucks, and some 140 or more plow operators based in seven garages, MDOT's Southwest Region maintenance crews will be the focus of the new pilot program using existing GPS technology in state plow trucks.

Under certain conditions, the public will be able to see the location of each plow truck on the 'Mi Drive' website. The program includes MDOT plow trucks in Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St Joseph and Van Buren counties. Snow plow locations will be plotted on the Mi Drive map when they are traveling faster than 10mph (16km/h) within 50 feet (15m) of the roadway. Other information posted for each plow will include whether the plow is down or salt is being spread. There will also be camera images available for some plows.

The Southwest Region was chosen to pilot the program because of the region's strong winter weather storms earlier in the season, as well as its high concentration of MDOT maintenance forces. The pilot program will be evaluated toward the end of the winter season, with a potential for future statewide application.

"This innovative feature allows us to be more accessible and accountable to our customers," said Michigan's state transportation director, Kirk T Steudle. "This technology will help motorists see where our plows are deployed, and what road conditions may be like ahead of their travels, as well as helping our maintenance forces better manage our efforts to keep Michigan roadways as clear and passable as possible during winter weather events."

Reprinted from *Traffic Technology Today*, November 24 issue.

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Your Help is Needed in Creating a New Certification Series

NICET is creating a new "Transportation Construction Inspection" (TCI) certification series by updating, restructuring, and expanding its existing Highway Construction program. The new exams will be formatted for computer-based testing, with certifications expected in four specialties:

- Highway Construction Inspection
- Urban Street Construction Inspection
- Railway Construction Inspection
- Airfield Construction Inspection

What is Certification?

"Certification" is a voluntary process that assesses individuals for the qualifications that are needed to properly perform a particular type of work.

Certification programs involve detailed development and maintenance procedures; communicating with candidates and stakeholders; processing applications and records; administering exams; evaluating work experience; issuing certificates and wallet cards; maintaining an accurate registry of certificants; processing and evaluating recertification applications; and fairly evaluating ethics violations and other complaints against certificants.

Building a NICET Certification Program

In the late 1970s, NICET worked with AASHTO, the USDOT, and several state DOTs to develop its first technician specialty program, "Highway Construction". The process they developed uses a combination of testing and work experience evaluation to certify inspectors at one of four Levels, from Level I (trainee) to Level IV (senior engineering technician).

While NICET staff manages program development, maintenance, and administration, only experienced practitioners can identify the content and set requirements for each certification. Volunteer subject-matter experts are needed to specify the scope of each certification, and the tasks, knowledge, and skills required; develop examination "blueprints"; establish work experience requirements; write, review, and approve/reject test questions; and provide test question ratings for setting exam passing scores.

There are currently over 3,600 individuals with active certifications in Highway Construction.

Your help is needed.

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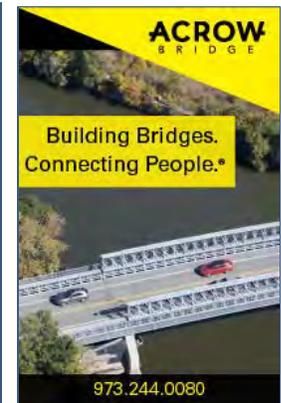
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Connected Vehicles 101

Approximately 4 Hours

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The connected vehicle research being sponsored by US DOT is moving from research to reality. The connected vehicle concept leverages the potentially transformative capabilities of wireless technology to make surface transportation safer, smarter and greener. Connected vehicles will ultimately enhance the mobility and quality of life of all Americans, while helping to reduce the environmental impact of surface transportation.

As we move towards implementation, we are developing a better understanding of how the connected vehicle infrastructure will be deployed and operated. A number of states have gained valuable experience in what it means to deploy connected vehicle application(s) in the field through their participation in ITS test

beds.

This introductory course targets transportation planners, managers, and engineers at state and local agency levels, who are interested in learning more about the Connected Vehicle Program and its benefits and implications for public agencies. Participants will learn about the safety, mobility and environmental applications envisioned for the connected vehicle environment.

Objectives

- What is meant by “connected” vehicles?
- What are the terms / jargon related to connected vehicles?
- What technology is used for connected vehicles?
- Which applications are available for connected vehicles?
- What is the pertinent USDOT research related to connected vehicles, including applications and technologies?

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