Pennsylvania Group Demonstrates Value to Taxpayers

Pennsylvania’s State Transportation Innovation Council has several success stories to brag about, including deployment of warm-mix asphalt, geosynthetic reinforced soil integrated bridge systems and the Safety Edge™.

But a clear benefit of the group, according to Pennsylvania Transportation Secretary Barry Schoch, is that it shows taxpayers the highway agency and its stakeholders are working aggressively to use tax dollars efficiently and apply new technologies to improve the transportation system. “That in itself is worth the effort of the STIC,” he said.

Schoch told the story of the development of Pennsylvania’s STIC during a fall 2013 virtual conference organized by the Federal Highway Administration to talk about the STIC initiative and announce a new incentive program to help the state-based groups deploy innovations.

STICs—led by the highway agency head and FHWA division administrator in each state—bring together transportation stakeholders to identify and implement innovations, including those promoted through FHWA’s Every Day Counts initiative. All 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico have STICs in some form.

STICs are an effective way to build a network to deploy innovation throughout the country. FHWA Administrator Victor Mendez told webinar participants: “Innovation is not

Agency Staff Learn From Colleagues at Peer Exchanges

When California Department of Transportation staff wanted to explore programs to certify local agencies to build Federal-Aid Highway Program projects, they got together with their Washington State counterparts to learn how they do it.

During a three-day peer exchange, the California team met with Federal Highway Administration and Washington State DOT experts to discuss the process of administering local agency projects from cradle to grave, with an emphasis on certification programs. They also talked with representatives of local agencies and metropolitan planning organizations about their experiences with Federal-Aid projects. FHWA hosted the event at its Washington Division office in Olympia.

Certification programs are one of the strategies FHWA is recommending in its Every Day Counts effort to help states administer local Federal-Aid projects. Through certification programs, state agencies confirm that local agencies have the ability to manage all or part of the project development and implementation process themselves. They enable states to delegate responsibilities under the Federal-Aid program and allow certified local agencies to manage their own projects, saving time and money.

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