Program Progress Performance Report for University Transportation Centers

Submitted To: Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Federal Grant Number: 69A3551747122

Project Title: Tier 1 University Transportation Center
Small Urban, Rural and Tribal Center on Mobility (SURTCOM)

Program Director: David Kack
Email: dkack@montana.edu
Phone: 406-994-7526

Submission Date: October 30, 2018

DUNS Number: 6254479820000
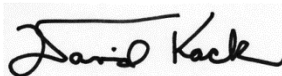
EIN Number: 81-6010045

Recipient Organization: Montana State University
Bozeman, MT 59717

Project Grant Period: November 30, 2016 – September 30, 2022

Reporting Period End Date: September 30, 2018

Report Term: PPPR #3

Signature:

1. Accomplishments

What are the major goals and objectives of the program?

The mission of the Small Urban, Rural and Tribal Center on Mobility (SURTCOM) is to conduct research and provide leadership, education, workforce development and technology transfer in all transportation-related aspects of mobility for people and goods, focusing specifically on small urban, rural and tribal areas. Montana State University (MSU) is the lead institution, with consortium members including Eastern Washington University (EWU) and North Dakota State University (NDSU).

What was accomplished under these goals?

During the period April – September 2018:

- The Director (David Kack) and Deputy Director (Jill Hough) of SURTCOM attended the UTC Mobility Summit in Washington, D.C. (April 12).

- The Director (David Kack) and Deputy Director (Jill Hough) of SURTCOM attended the CUTC/UTC summer meeting in Minneapolis, MN (June 4-6).

- WTI/MSU continued work on a small exploratory research project in conjunction with the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC) regarding freight/transportation issues for manufacturers in small urban, rural and tribal areas.

- Work continues with two WTI/MSU projects entitled *Using WIFI to Determine Transit Ridership* and *Autonomous Paratransit in Rural Areas.* The first project looks at using devices searching for WIFI signals as a potential low-cost way to count riders on transit vehicles, while the second project is a preliminary review (cost/benefit analysis) of using an autonomous paratransit vehicle in a rural setting.

- The project *Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure in Small Towns* neared completion. This project explores the current state of bike/ped infrastructure in small towns (population under 10,000 people) and low-cost solutions to improve that infrastructure.

- WTI/MSU Staff participated in the first meeting of the project panel and workshop for NCHRP 20-122, the Rural Research Roadmap project (September 28, 2018) in Denver, CO.

- Worked continued with an EWU project entitled *The Status and Issues for American Indian Transit in the West*. Beginning with a 2012 report, the EWU team has sought to update the information as a "state of tribal transit" update, including the identification of critical issues, and an assessment of western tribes in relation to transit.

- *The Impact of the Automobile on American Indian Reservations,* an EWU project, saw further progress. This report will assess the culture, use, and impact of the automobile on the land use and reservation design, which will inform efforts to address unmet need.

- EWU staff continued working on the project entitled *Mobility & Access on American Indian Reservations in the Western United States: Phase I.* This initial study has

documented issues related to distance and access and is establishing a framework for more detailed mobility analysis. The long-term goal is to understand the needs and address transportation systems and resources to serve American Indian reservations. Preliminary findings from this report were presented at the TRB Annual Meeting (January 2018) in the Native American Transportation Issues Committee (ABE 80) and at the Annual Meeting of the American Planning Association (April 2018).

- *Mobility on American Indian Reservations: A Tribal Context for Transportation,* an EWU project, saw progress. This project will provide a perspective on mobility, including historic change from successful tribal specific cultures pre-contact to contemporary mobility related to American Indian reservations to other emerging transportation and key issues. An important component of this work is to understand the dynamics of mobility, particularly within tribal and community cultures, access, needs, and issues.

- EWU staff continued work on *Best Cases for Tribal Transportation Safety: Media, Planning and Action*. These research projects (small projects) are under way to support tribes on how to safely provide mobility and raise awareness of the importance of mobility.

- NDSU plans to develop two Tribal Transit Training modules that will be available online. Rob Lynch received feedback on needed training topics during the National Tribal Indian Conference in Duluth, MN, September 19-20, 2018.

<u>What opportunities for training and professional development has the program provided?</u>

- Jill Hough (NDSU) presented two workshops, John Maxwell's "Becoming a Person of Influence" and "Everyone Communicates Few Connect" to the Nebraska Association of Transit Providers in Grand Island, NE (June 20, 2018).

- Rob Lynch (NDSU) presented three workshops for the Wyoming Transit Association (WYTRANS) on "Hiring and Retaining Great Employees," "Managing Vehicle and Facility Maintenance," and "Business Continuity and Crisis Management" in Riverton, WY June 20, 2018.

- Rob Lynch (NDSU) conducted two different two-day trainings on "Transit I" for Oregon Transportation providers. One training was provided in Salem, OR July 23-24 and the other training was provided in Warm Springs on July 25-26, 2018.

- NDSU (Rob Lynch) provided four sessions of "Title VI/LEP" training and two "Customer Service" trainings at the MASS Trans conference in Boyne Falls, MI August 10-11, 2018.

- NDSU (Rob Lynch) provided two training workshops on "Financial Management" and "FTA 101" to the Idaho Transportation Providers in Boise, ID on August 22, 2018.

- Jill Hough (NDSU) led the course on "Culture Code" for NDSU faculty, staff and students in Fargo and Bismarck, ND (June through September 2018).

- Rob Lynch (NDSU) provided two trainings at the Dakota Transit Association conference, "Ethics in the Workplace" and "Vehicle Maintenance" in Brookings, SD on September 17-18, 2018.

How have the results been disseminated? If so, in what ways?

- No projects have been completed yet.

What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals and objectives?

- Additional projects will begin, based on the SURTCOM UTC proposal.

- SURTCOM staff from EWU submitted an abstract titled *Tribal Mobility: Creating an Agenda for Research and Practice*, to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP). The conference is scheduled for October 25-28.

- It is anticipated that EWU staff will begin a project entitled *Mobility Research on American Indian Reservations (Phase II)*. This report will utilize learning and responses from western tribes related to mobility, access, and transportation needs identified in Phase I of the project and will create a more detailed and individualized analysis of mobility by American Indian reservation residents.

- It is anticipated that SURTCOM (NDSU) will begin a project gathering data on ITS technologies that rural transit providers use or plan to use. This is an update to a much earlier project NDSU conducted more than 10 years ago.

- NDSU also plans to develop a scope of work to investigate livability for tribes. Discussions were held at the NTIIC conference in Duluth and there was interest from the tribes to serve as case studies.

2. Products

Publications, conference papers and presentations

- April 12, 2018. The Director (David Kack) and Deputy Director (Jill Hough) of SURTCOM gave presentations about current research projects at the UTC Mobility Summit in Washington, D.C.

- April 21-24, 2018. Staff and a student from EWU presented a poster *American Indian Accessibility to Preventative Healthcare* at the American Planning Association Conference, New Orleans, LA.

- August 5-8, 2018. Staff from EWU helped to plan the Western Planner Conference at the Fort Hall Indian Reservation, ID. Further, Margo Hill presented *Federal Indian Law and the Power to Plan* at the conference.

- August 8-9, 2018. Margo Hill presented at the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) Summit on Drug Abuse Prevention, Anacortes, WA.

- August 22, 2018. Margo Hill presented *Community Engagement and Substance Abuse*, and *Understanding Tribal Sovereignty and Federal Indian Law and Policy* at the Tribal Trauma and Healing Conference, Wellpinit, WA.

- September 17-20, 2018. SURTCOM staff, from all partner entities, made presentations at the National Transportation in Indian Country Conference (NTICC) in Duluth, MN. Presentations included: a Keynote Address by Jay Otto (WTI/MSU) on Safety Culture; *Creating a Tribal Culture of Traffic Safety* (Jay Otto, WTI/MSU & Margo Hill, EWU); *How Research and SURTCOM Can Help You With Your Planning* (David Kack, WTI/MSU; Jill Hough, SURTC/NDSU; and Richard Rolland, EWU); *Challenges of Transit and Mobility in Rural Areas* (David Kack, WTI/MSU & Rob Lynch, SURTC/NDSU); *Tribal Transit Training: Self-paced Online Training Materials* (Rob Lynch, SURTC/NDSU); *WisDOT Inter-Tribal Task Force Model/Crash Data Reporting Panel*, Kimberly Vachal, NDSU.

Website(s) or other Internet site(s)

- SURTCOM website (www.surtcom.org)

- EWU website (https://www.ewu.edu/cbpa/programs/urban-regional-planning/surtcom)

Technologies or techniques

Nothing to Report

Inventions, patent applications, and/or licenses

Nothing to Report

Other products, such as data or databases, physical collections, audio or video products

Nothing to Report

3. Participants & Collaborating Organizations

What organizations have been involved as partners?

- As noted, Eastern Washington University and North Dakota State University are partners/collaborators in SURTCOM.

- The Montana Manufacturing Extension Center is partnering on some exploratory research concerning freight issues in small urban, rural and tribal areas.

- The Washington State DOT (WSDOT) has worked with EWU for several years and continues that collaboration.

- Additional EWU partners include the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI), numerous individual tribes, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) .

- The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) is working on several projects with SURTCOM lead MSU.

- The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is working with SURTCOM partner NDSU on a project.

Have other collaborators or contacts been involved?

SURTCOM's Advisory Board, which consists of one representative (each) from the Montana, North Dakota and Washington (state) DOTs, three tribal representatives, and one person from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), receives PPPR reports and is encouraged to submit topics/issues for potential research projects. Further, staff from SURTCOM organizations attend meetings of relevant TRB Committees and other organizations (ATNI), where issues/topics are discussed, and potential projects identified.

4. Impact

The development of the principal discipline(s) of the project

The main goal of SURTCOM is to enhance mobility of both people and goods in small urban, rural and tribal areas. Through our research and other activities, we hope to:
- Increase access to opportunities that promote equity and economic development through mobility;
- Implement innovative multi-modal solutions in these areas;
- Implement smart cities innovations in small urban, rural, and tribal communities;
- Increase active transportation modes, especially walking and cycling; and,
- Address mobility issues on Federal lands.

Other disciplines

Nothing to Report

The development of human resources

Nothing to Report

Physical, institutional, and information resources at the university and/or other partner institution

Nothing to Report

Technology transfer (include transfer of results to entities in government or industry, adoption of new practices, or instances where research has led to the initiation of a startup company)

Nothing to Report

Society beyond science and technology

Nothing to Report

5. Changes/Problems

Changes in approach and reasons for change

Nothing to Report

Actual or anticipated problems or delays and actions or plans to resolve them

Nothing to Report

Changes that have a significant impact on expenditures

Nothing to Report

Significant changes in use or care of human subjects, vertebrate animals, and/or biohazards

Nothing to Report

Change of primary performance site location from that originally proposed

Nothing to Report

6. Special Reporting Requirements

Not Applicable