

## **Safeguarding Our Most Valuable Asset – The Public Transportation Workforce**

*Failure to address human capital assets risky for safety and performance*

**San Jose, CA – November 14, 2016** – Human resources represent the largest ongoing expenditure for public transit agencies, yet transit asset management plans routinely ignore this critical issue. The [Mineta Transportation Institute's](#) latest Transit Perspective, a regular series from thought leaders in the transportation community, looks at the importance of human resources to National Transit Asset Management Program development and transit safety performance. Perspective-author, MTI Research Associate [Dr. Beverly Scott](#), argues that the common practice of a singular focus on physical assets to the exclusion of human and other factors is, at best, a partial approach. Scott, a distinguished leader in transportation workforce development, penned the MTI perspective: *[Unfinished Business: The Importance of Human Resources to National Transit Asset Management Program Development and Transit Safety Performance](#)*.

MAP-21 established the requirement for a National Transit Asset Management Plan, including a transit asset management system focused on physical capital assets. According to Scott, while these physical assets are “critical to the safety and performance of a public transportation system, we must recognize, elevate, and integrate human capital management and strategic workforce planning into both transit asset management plans and comprehensive safety plans.”

Scott, who was recognized by President Obama as a “Transportation Innovator of Change” identifies a number of workforce development challenges facing the transit industry, particularly related to labor shortages in skilled and specialized technical areas. To address these challenges, there is a need to include a human resources component into Transit Asset Management plans, which will help ensure that public transportation agencies have the right mix of knowledge, skills, and experience to safely and effectively operate daily service and implement capital program responsibilities.

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### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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systems. She has also served in senior level positions at the MTA New York City Transit (MTA), the New Jersey Transit Corporation (NJT), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA), Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART), and the Houston Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Houston METRO). At the federal level, Dr. Scott serves as Vice Chair of the National Infrastructure Advisory Council, Department of Homeland Security.

## **ABOUT THE MINETA TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE**

The Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI) conducts research, education, and information transfer programs regarding surface transportation policy and management issues, especially related to transit. Congress established MTI in 1991 as part of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. MTI won national re-designation competitions in 2002, 2006 and 2012. The Institute is funded through the US Department of Transportation, the US Department of Homeland Security, the California Department of Transportation, and public and private grants. The internationally respected members of the MTI Board of Trustees represent all major surface transportation modes. MTI, the lead institute for the nine-university Mineta National Transit Research Consortium, is affiliated with San Jose (CA) State University's Lucas College and Graduate School of Business. Visit [transweb.sjsu.edu](http://transweb.sjsu.edu)

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