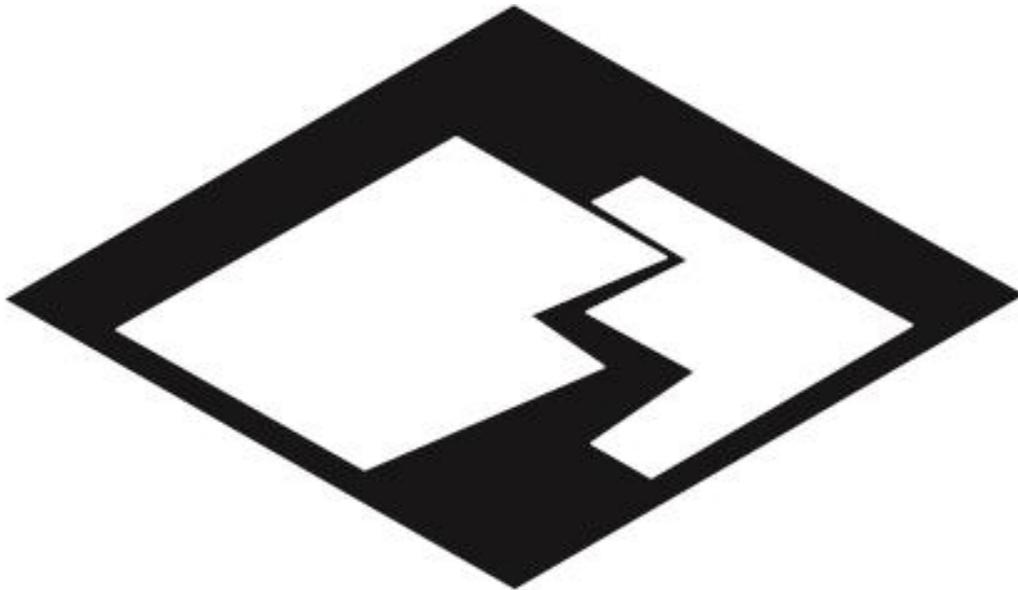


VERMONT LOCAL ROADS

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

JANUARY 2016



VERMONT LOCAL ROADS

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THE PROGRAM

The Vermont Local Roads program (VLR) provides assistance to municipal highway departments and town governments to improve their road networks by providing training, technical assistance, communication tools and information exchange.

MISSION AND VISION

Mission: To foster a safe, efficient, and environmentally sound surface transportation system by improving skills and increasing knowledge of the transportation workforce and decision makers.

Vision: Improve the quality and safety of the surface transportation system through collaborative partnerships, training, and information exchange.

STAFF

Kevin Gadapee – Branch Manager

Todd Eaton – Circuit Rider

Holly Hayden – Program Coordinator



PROGRAM SERVICES

WORKSHOPS

There were **73** workshop offerings provided during calendar year 2015 many that were similar in nature to courses that have been offered by Vermont Local Roads in previous years.

Workshop examples:

- Road System Management Software
- Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility
- Stepping up to Supervision
- Rivers & Roads Tier II
- Winter Maintenance
- Trenching & Shoring
- Work Zone/Flagger

Vermont Local Roads also provided new programming:

New workshop examples:

- Construction Safety Awareness
- Ethics
- Interviewing and Hiring for Success
- Microsoft Excel
- Writing the Performance Review
- Facility Compliance
- Better Back Roads
- Air Brake System
- Traffic Signal
- Safety Matters

Based on our outreach to the municipalities, several key training areas that will be offered in 2017:

Workshop such as:

- ✓ Small electrical training
- ✓ Culvert installation
- ✓ Welding training
- ✓ Heavy Equipment (grader, loader, excavator)
- ✓ Capital planning and budget development
- ✓ Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) standards
- ✓ Basics of a Good Gravel Road (Best Management Practices)

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WORKSHOPS CONTINUED

Vermont Local Roads serves their customers need for training and will continually provide training upon request.

Workshops were held in regional locations around the state utilizing almost exclusively municipal property.

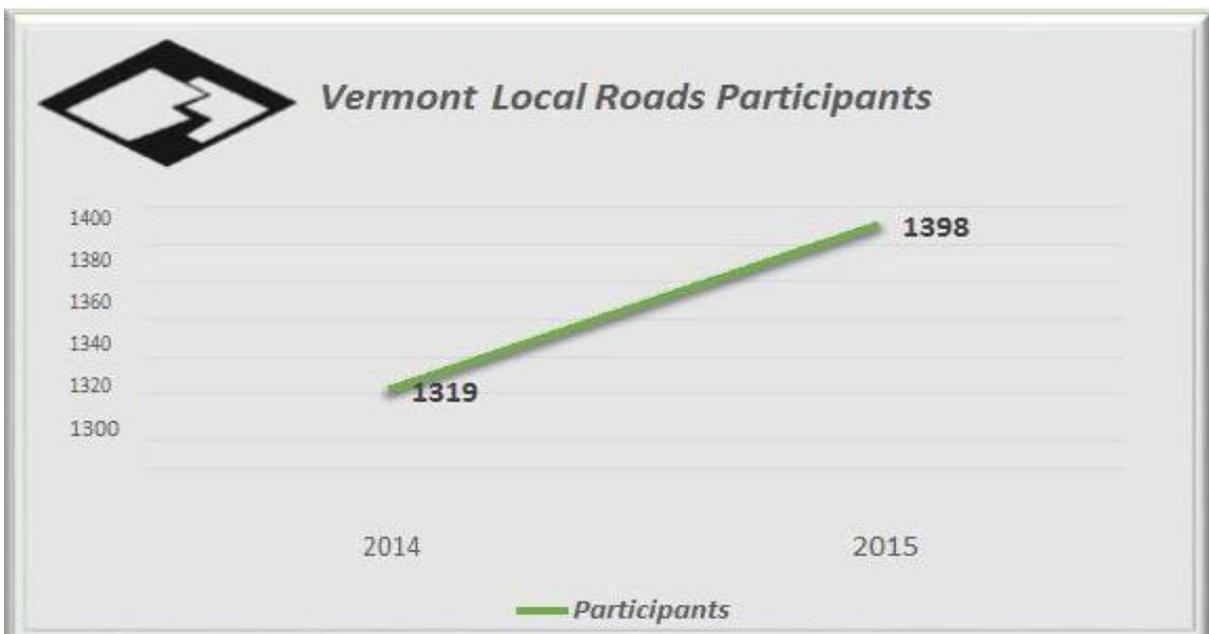
Sample locations:

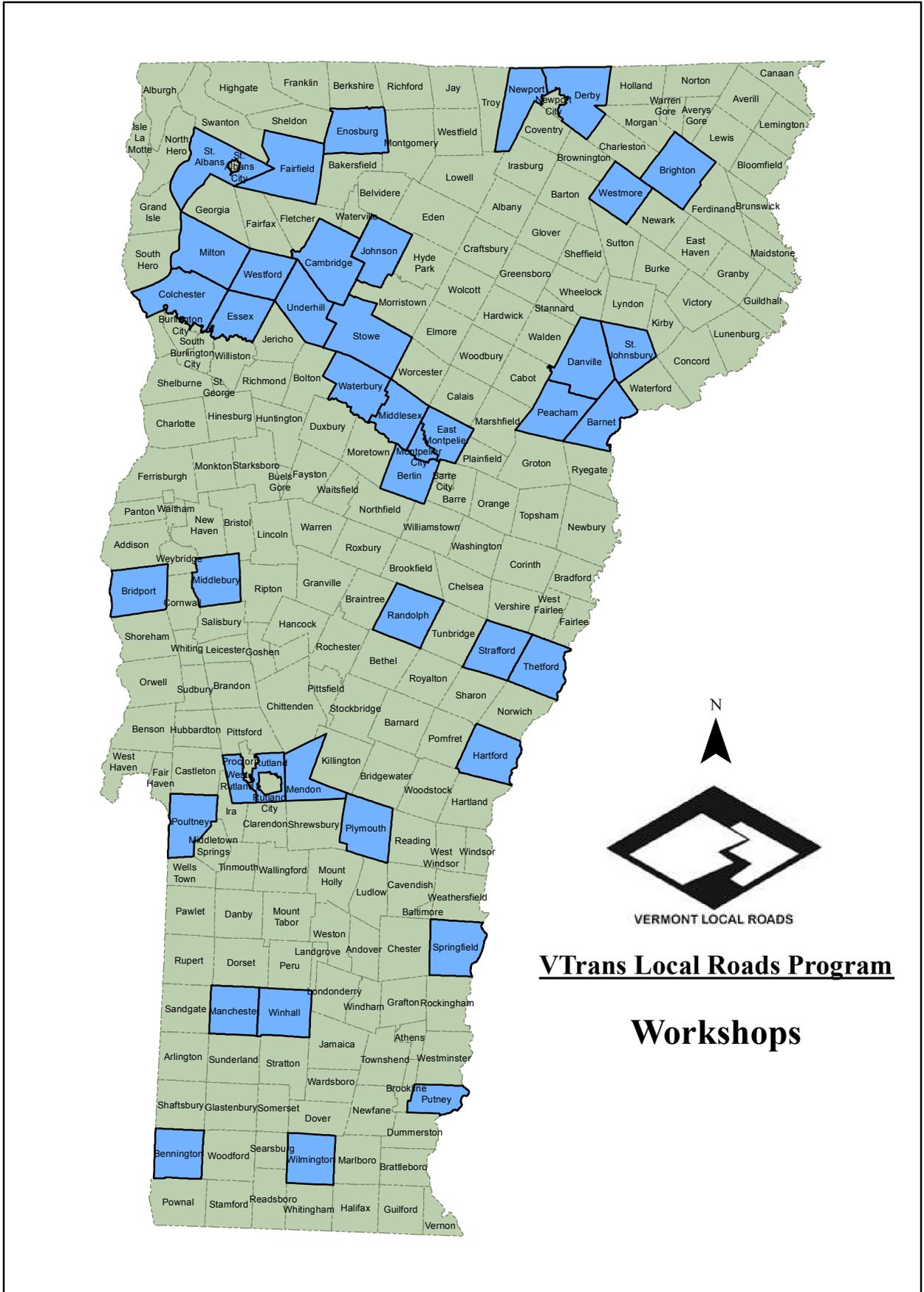
- Manchester
- Cambridge
- Colchester
- Rutland
- Bennington
- Derby
- St. Albans
- Danville
- Wilmington
- Newport

The quality of our workshops is vitally important therefore at least 1 VLR staff member will be present at every workshop.

Attendance for calendar year 2015:

- **73** workshop sessions
- **46** separate topics
- **1,398** participants





VTrans Local Roads Program

Workshops

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Tri-Ax Geogrid Workshop
Poultney - July 2015



Trenching & Shoring
St. Albans - July 2015

Rivers & Roads Tier II
Cambridge - September 2015

Designing Pedestrian Facilities for Accessibility
Essex - December 2015



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SERVICE REQUESTS/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

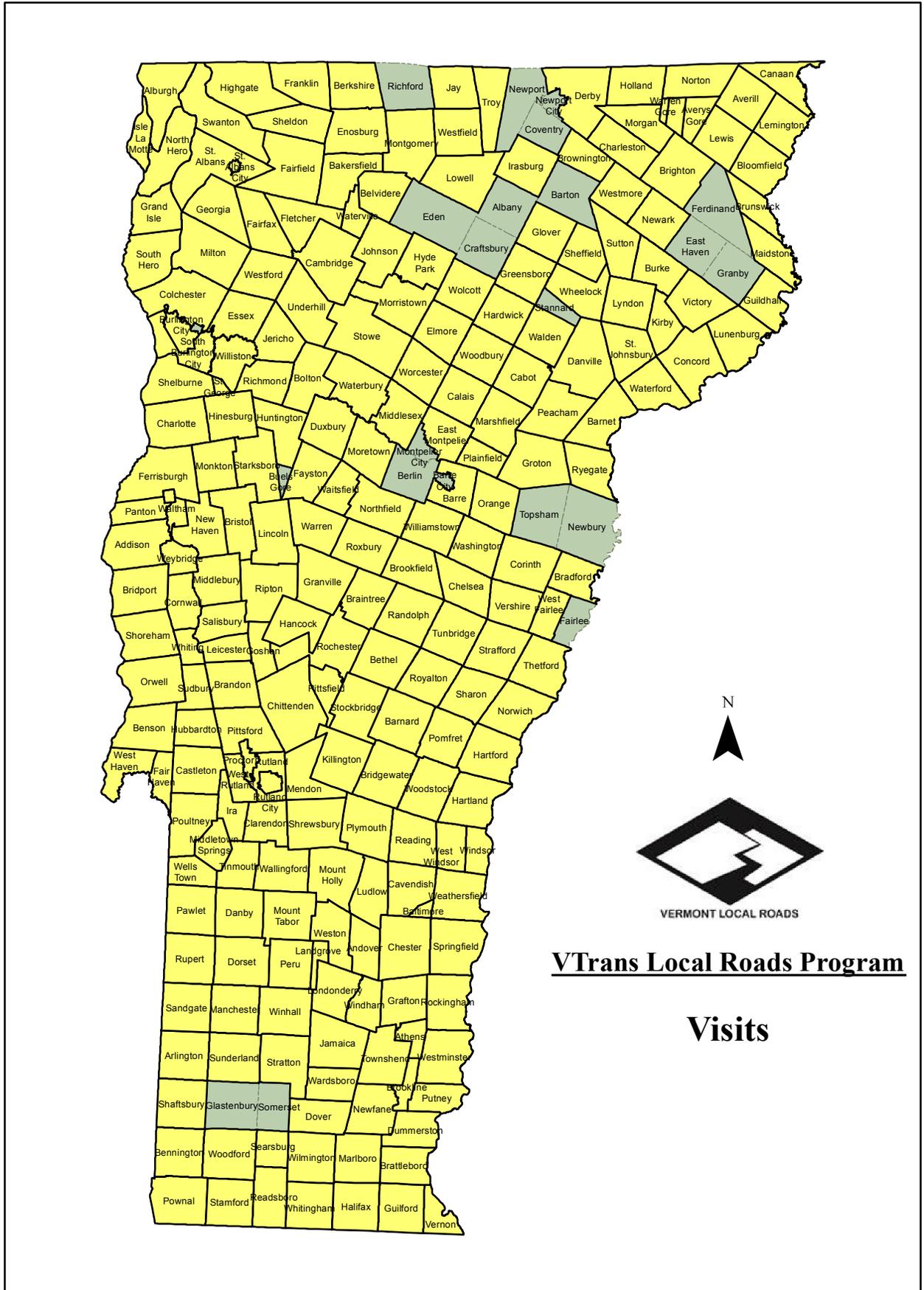
- **54 Service Requests** – Formal requests received via email, telephone, listserv, circuit rider reports and website.
- **300 Town Visits** – Total # of towns visited by the Vermont Local Roads Circuit Rider and Branch Manager for calendar year 2015.

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

Website – The VLR website provides resources such as workshop description and schedule, contact information, Roads Scholar information, technical resources (such as Tailgate Talks), current road conditions, written material (such as newsletters and directory of officials), classifieds sections, listserv information and registration as well as Facebook and other media outlets.

The VLR website will be migrated to the new State of Vermont website template February 2016. The template has several design features that will assist VLR in organizing our content and providing quick easy access to high demand content. This standard template will continue to be developed with new features being added regularly.

The screenshot shows the Vermont Local Roads website homepage. At the top, the logo for Vermont Local Roads is displayed, along with the text "Vermont Agency of Transportation". A navigation menu includes links for Home, Contact, About Us, and Site Map. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the navigation menu, there are several sections: "Road Notes" with a list of articles, "511 Road Reports" with a link to check current road and driving conditions, and a "Twitter" section. The main content area features a large banner with the text "VERMONT LOCAL ROADS" and a logo. Below the banner, there is a welcome message for the Vermont's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Center, followed by a description of the program's goals. To the right, there are two smaller images: one showing a road construction site and another showing a road with water runoff.



VTrans Local Roads Program

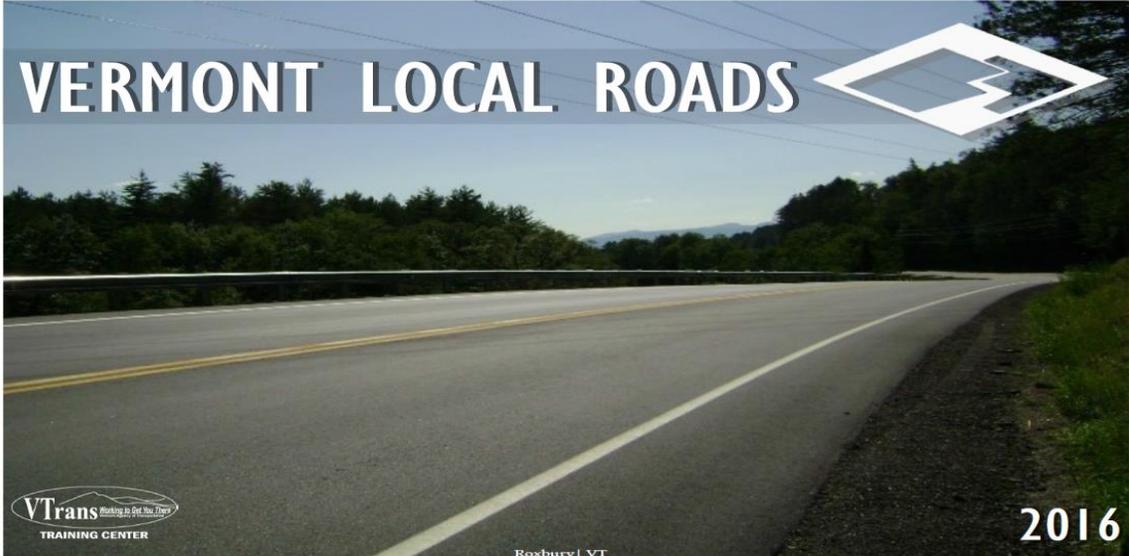
Visits

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Newsletter – A total of 3 newsletters were produced and distributed to more than **7,035 recipients**. The newsletter is also available electronically via the VLR website as well as distributed on our listserv.



Calendar – An annual VLR calendar was produced in December 2015 and distributed with informational content for the municipalities which included safety related data and information from our partners, statewide commodity contracts for towns to participate, as well as Roads Scholar program information.

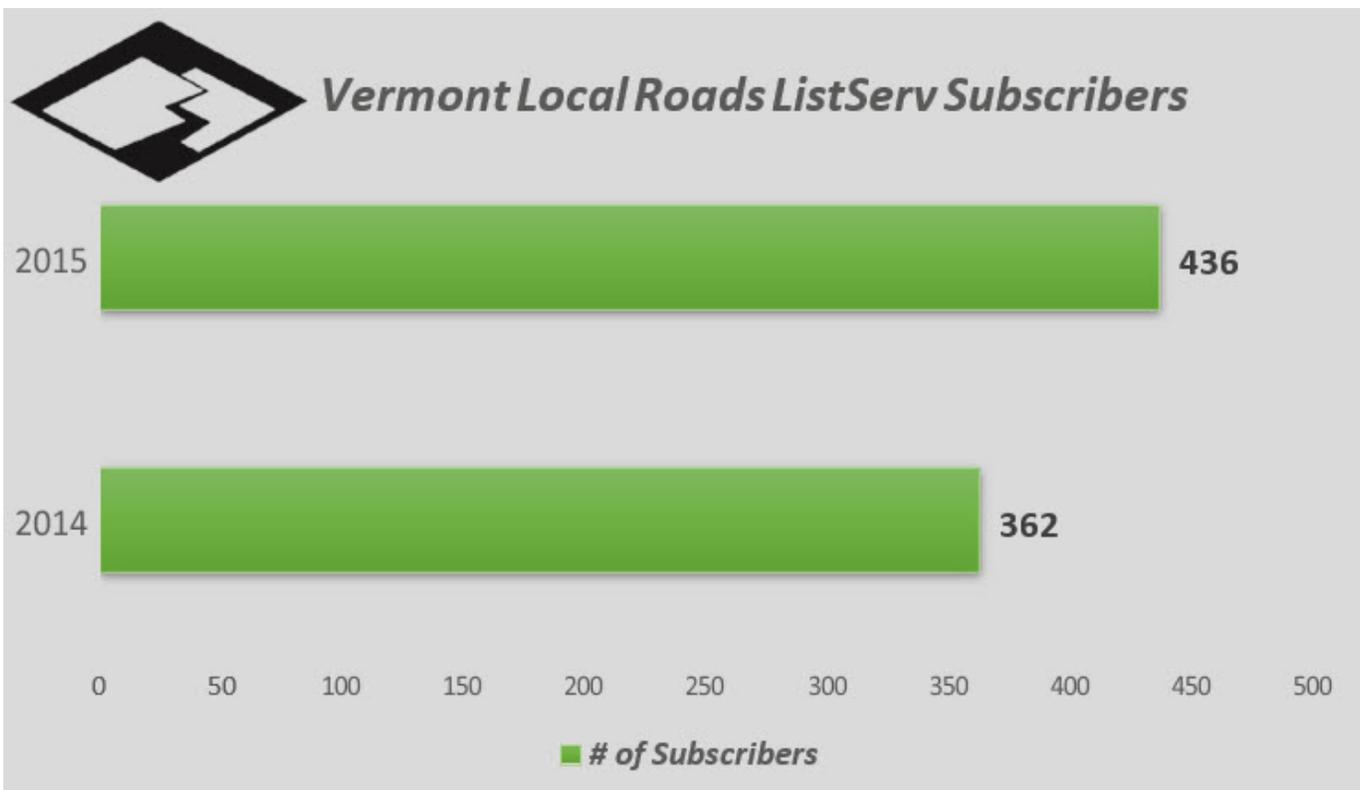


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Listserv – Subscribers have increased from **362 to 437** in calendar year 2015 with weekly activity on the site. The Listserv is the most efficient way to quickly inform municipalities of workshop opportunities, highlight municipal equipment for sale as well as state surplus equipment, and advertise municipal employment opportunities. It serves as a discussion forum for the subscribers to collaborate with each other. This service allows towns to communicate with each other as well as open discussions and questions to other communities for their input on any particular town related subject.

Recent topics included:

- ✓ Private road plowing
- ✓ Better Back Roads grant amount increase
- ✓ Right of Way impact fees
- ✓ Emerald Ash Borer policy planning
- ✓ Culvert sleeve installation
- ✓ Roadside moving safety
- ✓ Traffic Incident training
- ✓ Deep ditch safety



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Roads Scholar Program – This program will continue with appropriate recognition given to scholars completing the various levels and categories.

Roads Scholar	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Masters
Categories	Hours Required per Category for Each Level			
Equipment	18	30	36	36
Environmental	6	6	12	12
Safety	6	12	18	18
Supervisory	0	6	12	12
Technical	30	42	48	48
Tailored to choice				49
Cumulative Hours	60	96	126	175

Todd Eaton presenting Travis Brassor
Town of Wilmington his Level 1 certificate



Kevin Gadapee presenting John Smith
Town of Barnet his Level 1 certificate



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Partnerships

Establishing and maintaining partnerships are high priorities of VLR, FHWA, and NLTAPA. Below is a list of key partners:

National Local Technical Assistance Program Association (NLTAPA)

VLR staff will continue to look for opportunities to collaborate, learn and/or share best practices with their neighboring LTAP centers.

Regional Planning Commissions (RPC's) & Road Foreman Groups

- VLR staff collaborates with RPC Transportation Planners with outreach assistance for the Regional Safety Forums; organize road foreman meetings, occasionally providing programs, and frequently attend a variety of foreman meetings. Attend Transportation Planning Initiative (TPI) monthly meetings.

Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT)

- VLR communicates with VLCT on a monthly basis to prevent duplicity of workshops
- VLR meets with VLCT on a quarterly basis to maintain open communication and collaboration
- VLCT is a member of the VLR Key Stakeholder group
- VLR will exhibit at the VLCT Municipal Town Fair and attend the Annual meeting

Kevin Gadapee – VLCT Town Fair Day – Killington - October 8, 2015



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Better Back Roads Program (BBR)

The relationship between VLR and BBR will continue to grow in the following areas:

- VLR to participate in the grant selection committee
- Increased communication between BBR and VLR tech requests
- Publish news and grant awards in VLR newsletter
- Co-publish training and best practice materials
- VLR is partnering with BBR to help provide updated information on the grant process

VT Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

- VLR sits on the Water Quality Communications Committee to share the municipal perspective
- VLR sits on the Stormwater General Permit (Act 64) “core” and “technical” committees for the development of the permit
- VLR will continue to understand the changes in best management practices to meet new water quality standards for municipalities
- VLR will provide training and resources for DEC to municipalities

VT Municipal Highway Association (VMHA)

- VLR will participate in the Annual Field Day and Expo
- VLR will provide administrative assistance for Field Day

Holly Hayden – VMHA Field Day- Barre-May 13, 2015



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Other partners include, but are not limited to:

- UVM Extension Service
- UVM Transportation Research Center (UVM UTC)
- VT Agency of Natural Resources (ANR)
- VT Nature Conservancy
- VT Emergency Management
- VT Occupational Safety & Health Administration
- VT Composting Association
- Friends of the Winooski River
- American Public Works Association (APWA)
- National Association of County Engineers (NACE)
- American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

Key Stakeholder Group

VLR established a key stakeholder group that meets quarterly to gather feedback and validate the direction of the program.

This group consists of:

- 3 VLR staff members
- VTTC Program Manager
- 4 municipal members
- 1 VLCT member
- 1 BBR member
- 1 RPC member

Testimonials from Key Stakeholder Group

Received by Floyd Sheesley, Operations Manager, Town of Colchester –

“The Vermont Local Roads program has continued to be a valuable tool for disseminating information to my peers and collecting information and professional opinions regarding work techniques, tools, and potential large equipment purchases. The talented Staff has sifted through the jumble of training hours for employees throughout the State and has worked on expanding the training opportunities provided by them. They have been open and willing to tracking down and providing specific training (i.e. Traffic Signal Training) that may have been out of reach for individual Towns to provide to their employees. As a result of their training opportunities the Town of Colchester was able to elevate 3 employees up the ranks of their Road Scholar Program (one of which completed the Masters Level of training) this past year. As a member for the VLR Program Key Stakeholders Group I look forward to continuing to work with everyone to further develop the training opportunities that they provide for my employees and utilize the ListServ to network with other DPW Foreman and Managers. I would like to thank the Senate Transportation Committee for continuing to support this valuable asset that is made available to all of the Communities in the State.”

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Received by Alan May, Better Back Roads Program Coordinator

“This letter is in support of the Vermont Local Roads program transition into the state of Vermont. As a former road foreman I know the importance of the workshops that are offered by the present staff to keep up with all the new regulations and safety factors that seem to be overlooked at times. I have been to several road foreman’s meetings around the state, and there is always a member of (VLR) staff there, not only informing the municipalities of upcoming workshops but inquiring of what that certain group wants to focus on for training. I have had the pleasure of working with the staff to host mini workshops around the state to help with grant applications for the Better Roads Program, formally known as the Better Backroads Program. The staff at (VLR) has the knowledge and commitment that makes this program a great success. I look forward to working with them again this round of grants, not only for their help in the workshops but also their expertise in technical assistance to the municipalities.”

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ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ❖ Composed a needs assessment survey and will distribute by the end of January 2016.
- ❖ Database Cleanup – VTrans IT department assisted VLR with the clean-up of the current database at no charge. In order for the road scholar reports to be accurate, the database had to be cleansed.
- ❖ Road Scholars are receiving their awards and recognition as workshops are held. Road Scholar reports are being provided at every workshop.
- ❖ VLR has moved to a new space in VTTC which provides their own entrance to the program. Additional space has been provided for a meeting area.

2016 GOALS

- ❖ Heavy Equipment workshop contract is being developed for training targeted the summer of 2016.
- ❖ Bring more workshops directly to towns in their regional locations.
- ❖ Increase the listserv membership to share resources.
- ❖ Deliver mobile computer lab workshops to towns.
- ❖ VTTC will implement a new Learning Management System (LMS) in spring of 2016 and VLR's database will be migrated into this new system. This LMS will provide more robust tools and a much more stable platform to store our information. If desired, a municipal employee will have access to their own training records. This new system will allow significant improvements and data collection on training evaluations and in the future be leveraged for E-Learning capabilities.