

# National Financial Management Symposium



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## Event Mission

The Build America Transportation Investment Center (BATIC) Institute is hosting a National Financial Management Symposium May 20–22 at the Sheraton Pentagon City in Arlington, Virginia. The symposium will serve as a capstone of peer exchanges on financial management topics that have been hosted by the BATIC Institute over the last two years. The symposium endeavors to reach as many state DOTs as possible to focus on essential and timely transportation finance topics in a manner that answers questions and suggests improvements, going beyond just sharing common concerns and current practices. The overall goal is to help state DOTs build internal capacity to improve financial programs and deliver projects more cost effectively. The symposium will focus on key topical presentations and facilitated group exchanges, providing opportunities for discussion and networking.

## Audience

Symposium attendance will be capped at 150, with up to three participants per state DOT attending. It is anticipated that participants could be a mix of mid- and senior-level officials drawn from the following major practice areas: Planning and Programming (e.g., planning manager, programming manager, STIP coordinator, construction program manager) and Budget and Finance (e.g., chief financial officer, director of administration, budget analyst/officer, fiscal analyst, accountant, cash/funds manager, treasurer, controller). A key feature of previous BATIC Institute peer exchanges has been active participation from FHWA Division Offices and headquarters staff. FHWA participants may include financial managers and program analysts from Division Offices and subject matter experts from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and the Resource Center.

## Format

The symposium will take place over 2.5 days and cover five general focus areas geared toward the primary interests of the target audience members, as expressed through participation in past financial management peer exchanges. The format will consist of plenary sessions, smaller-group track sessions, and workshops.

The plenary sessions will be moderated groups of 3–6 expert panelists from state DOTs, FHWA, other public agencies, and the private sector discussing the focus areas. The track sessions will offer an opportunity for a more detailed examination and discussion of specific topics within a focus area and may include opportunities to report back the observations and recommendations to the plenary group. Track sessions would encourage identification of specific ideas and changes that might make a difference in current practices or outcomes. Workshops would address topics in a more hands-on, technically-focused manner and conclude with a plenary session to discuss findings. The conceptual approach to the track sessions and workshops is for participants to focus on outcomes (deliverables or answers to specific questions) with which they can return home and act on or use in practice.

The table on the next page describes the planned focus areas along with respective track sessions or workshops.

**FOCUS AREAS**

**Future of the Federal-aid Program**

The Federal role (including reauthorization and Highway Trust Fund solvency) and what states/localities can do on their own. What are the top 5–10 challenges of the future for the Federal-aid Program?

**Program and Funds Management**

Focus on the challenges faced by state DOTs in managing at the program level and specific improvements sought, including those driven by key performance indicators and changes in culture and practices.

**Project Delivery and Management**

Focus on challenges faced by state DOTs in managing at the project level and specific improvements sought, including those driven by key performance indicators and changes in culture and practices.

**Business Systems**

State DOT financial management systems and how they are integrated (or not) with other essential business systems (planning and programming, procurement, project management, operations).

**Workforce Issues**

Dealing with workforce challenges as transportation agencies evolve from planners/builders to funders/operators to information and mobility providers.

**PRELIMINARY SESSIONS / WORKSHOPS**

- Impacts of “disrupters” (automation, electrification, sharing) on the Federal role, including regulations, institutional structures, and revenue mechanisms
- Alternative revenue mechanisms, including road user charges: identification, institutional issues, collection, analysis, and use
- State and local legislative initiatives
- General discussion of program management issues
- Cash management requirements and best practices: forecasting, cash flow, August redistribution, rescissions, STIP, etc.
- Use of and potential enhancements to Federal funds management tools: advance construction, indirect costs, toll credits, in-kind contributions, fund swapping, transfers, etc.
- General discussion of project delivery issues
- Project authorization issues: defining the project, developing cost estimates, using alternative delivery approaches, etc.
- Project management issues: modifications, billings, inactive obligations, end dates, improper payments, project closeouts, audits, etc.
- Workshop on FMIS, potentially covering: automation, approvals/notifications, navigation, reports, performance/speed, transfers, use of certain data fields, project end dates/closeout, improper payments, troubleshooting, FHWA support and training
- Workshop on state enterprise systems (software / system solutions)
- Current workforce challenges and future workforce needs
- Strategies for talent management: recruitment, retention, succession, knowledge transfer and operational continuity