

Montana Local Technical Assistance Program

Quarterly Progress Report

MDT Project No. 02443

SFY 2025 Q1

July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024

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FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

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Executive Summary/Major Accomplishments

This State Fiscal Year (SFY 2025) Quarter 1 Report is submitted to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide details on the activities and project work of Montana LTAP in support of MDT Project No. 02443, Montana Local Technical Assistance Program.

From July to September 2024, LTAP hosted 352 in-class participants, in 16 different classes taught at 12 different locations, accounting for 95 hours of instruction, with a reach of 2,054 in-person contact hours. Course enrollment tends to be lower in Quarter 1 due to our customers' seasonal workload, as the summer months are the busiest for heavy construction and maintenance work. Figure 1 and Table 1 provide an overview of training attendance by customer type.

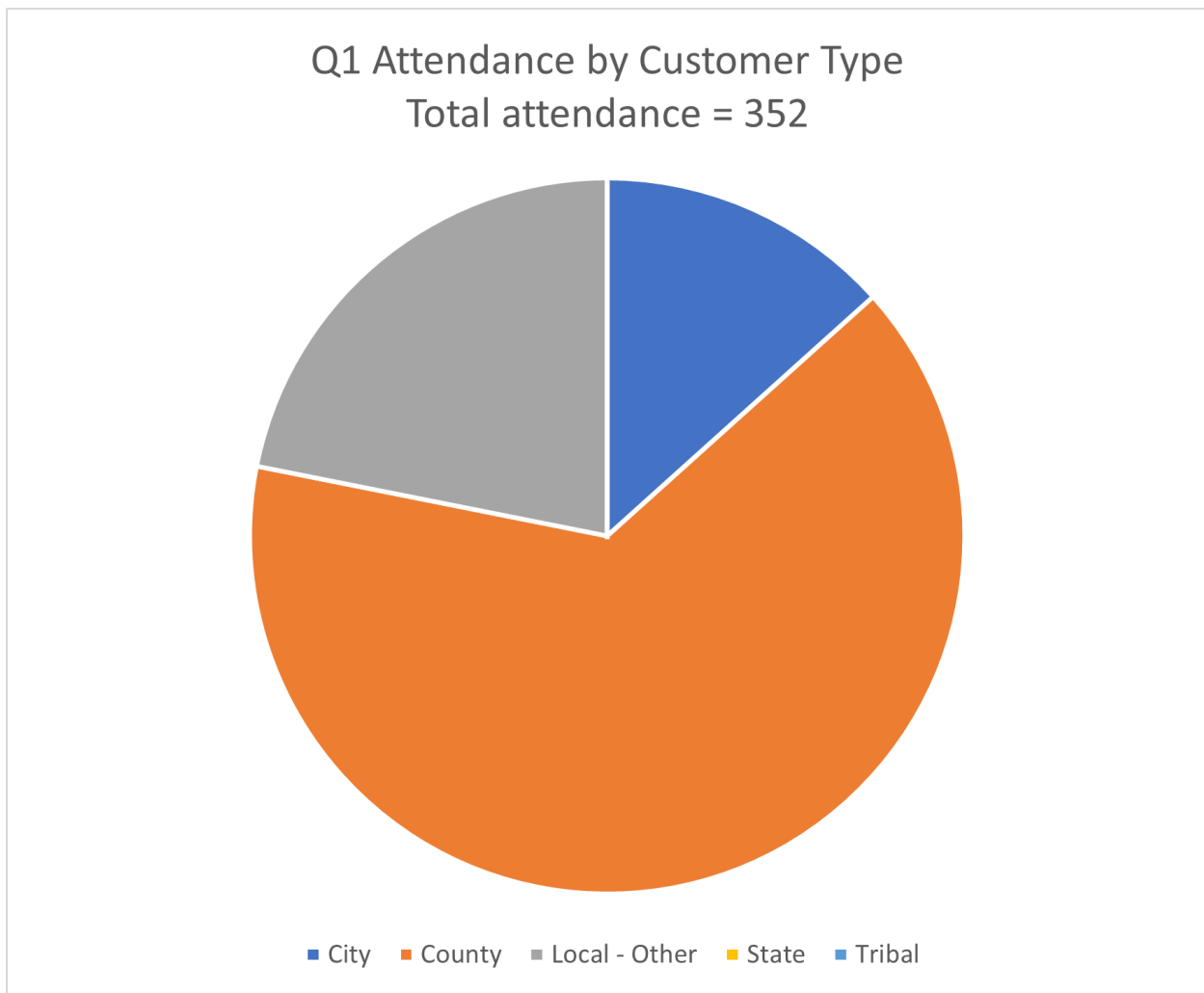


Figure 1: Q1 training participation by customer type

Table 1: Agency Attendees by Quarter, FY 2025

Customer Type	2025 Q1: 352 Attendees	2025 Q2: Attendees	2025 Q3: Attendees	2025 Q4: Attendees
City	13%			
County	65%			
State	0%			
Tribal	0%			
Local/Other*	22%			

*Includes Federal agencies, contractors, homeowner associations, private road agencies, community groups, student groups, and all others requesting training assistance.

Training Overview

During Q1, LTAP provided 16 trainings under the Safety, Infrastructure Management, and Workforce Development (Equipment Operations) focus areas. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of classes delivered per focus area. Note that Workforce Development is divided between Equipment Operations and Flagging.

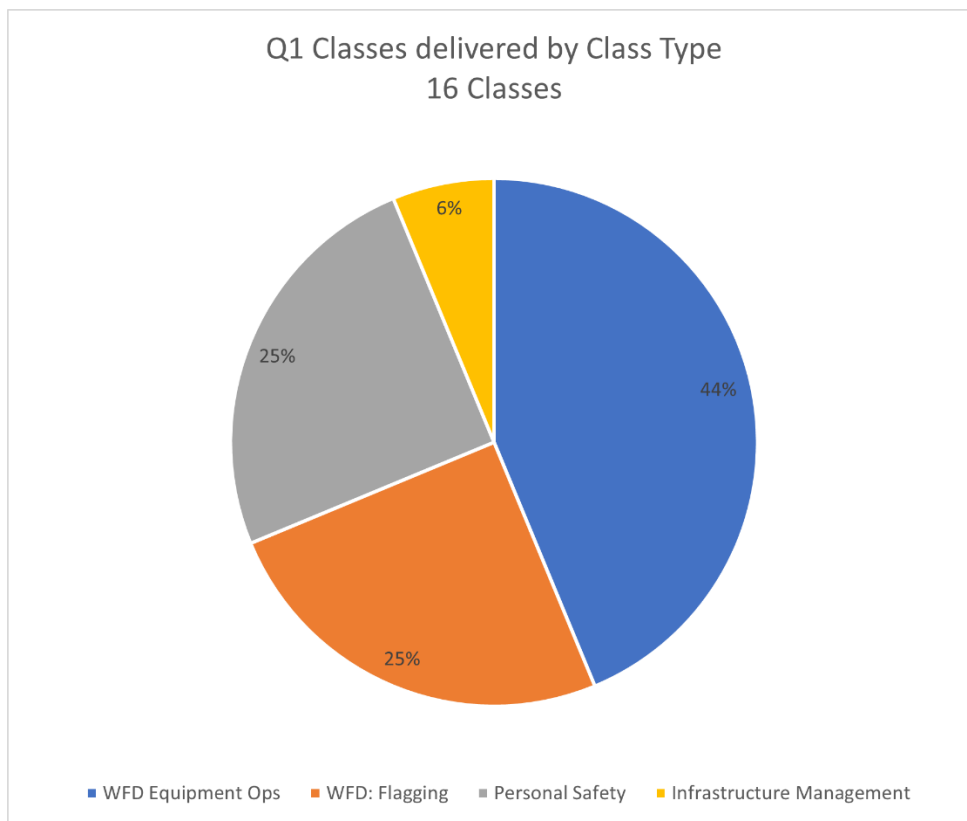


Figure 2: Number of training classes by focus area delivered during Q1

In addition to the three focus areas delivered to customers, MT LTAP personnel participated in an Organizational Excellence (professional development and leadership training for LTAP personnel) activity – attending the National NLTAPA Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico in July.

This Quarterly progress report further details these activities by focus area:

- Safety
- Infrastructure Management
- Workforce Development
- Organizational Excellence

Focus Area: Safety

Safety is incorporated into all classes, hosted activities, technical assistance, and training. This includes messages on Toward Zero Deaths, seatbelt usage, and distracted driving, as well as the LTAP personal safety classes, work zone safety, and roadway and operations/maintenance safety.

Safety efforts this quarter included:

- Personal Safety - Confined Space class and Mower Safety Webinar
- Day 1 of the Snow Rodeos in Sidney and Missoula: Trenching and Excavation Safety

These courses accounted for 23 of the 95 class hours delivered this quarter and reached 109 (45%) of the 352 total customers taught this quarter.

Table 2 provides Montana LTAP's schedule of specific safety-related training, the communities served, attendance levels, and total contact hours.

Table 2: Safety related trainings provided in FY 25 Q1

Q1 Courses July-Sept 2024		Participants	County	City	Tribal	State	Local-Other	Contact Hrs
7/17/2024	Confined Space Entry Safety - Hamilton	10		10				80
8/20/2024	Webinar: Mower Safety/Safety - Online	21	21					21
9/17/2024	2024 Snow Rodeo, Richland Co. FG - Trenching and Excavation	30	30					180
9/24/2024	2024 Snow Rodeo, Missoula Co FG - Trenching and Excavation	48	33	15				288
TOTAL		109	84	25	0	0	0	569

Focus Area: Infrastructure Management

Infrastructure management is a foundational topic that is integrated into multiple courses, both as a primary focus and as a supporting element. Montana LTAP recognizes the growing need for improved infrastructure management systems and is actively promoting this area. To address this need, we recommend courses that emphasize maintaining accurate inventories of culverts, cattleguards, and signs, as well as implementing effective pavement management and condition assessment strategies.

Infrastructure Management was the primary focus of one LTAP course offering this quarter. The six-hour training welcomed 18 participants in Joliet, MT and covered Gravel Road Fundamentals and PAVement Surface Evaluation & Rating (PASER) for Gravel Roads.

This training accounted for 108 contact hours with our customers, and reached 18 (5%) of the 352 total customers taught this quarter

Table 3 provides information on Montana LTAP's Q1 Infrastructure Management training, the community served, attendance level, and total contact hours.

Table 3: Infrastructure Management related trainings provided in FY 25 Q1

Q1 Courses July-Sept 2024		Participants	County	City	Tribal	State	Local-Other	Contact Hrs
7/17/2024	PASER And Gravel Roads Joliet	18	18	10				108

Focus Area: Workforce Development

Workforce development remains a high-demand course type, primarily driven by our customers' expressed needs. The recent Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) has placed a strong emphasis on workforce development, suggesting increased opportunities for new course content and offerings.

Workforce training is essential for our local agencies, and when combined with personal safety training, we can effectively reach employees at all levels. We consistently receive positive feedback from our city, county, and tribal customers, who appreciate our ability to equip their workforce with the skills needed to effectively manage, operate, and maintain their roadways. Given ongoing turnover and worker shortages, workforce development continues to be a critical component of our program delivery

Workforce Development comprised eleven of our 16 classes, or 69% of our class delivery this quarter. Trainings for Q1 included Day 2 of our Annual Snow Rodeos in Missoula and Sidney, as well as Grader Operations Basics, Skid Steer, Forklift, and Flagging Certifications. These accounted for 1406 customer contact hours.

LTAP will continue to work toward offering more in-house Motor Grader Operation training this year. We have held this class in Teton County this quarter, and it was highly successful based on feedback from the attendees. LTAP has also hired a part-time instructor to assist with these road grader classes this fiscal year. Table 4 provides Montana LTAP's schedule of Workforce Development trainings, the communities served, attendance levels, and total contact hours.

Table 4: Workforce Development training provided in FY 25 Q1

Q1 Courses July-Sept 2024		Participants	County	City	Tribal	State	Local-Other	Contact Hrs
7/18/2024	Skid Steer/ Forklift, Hamilton, MT	9	2	7				
8/6/2024	Grader Operation Basics, Teton Co., Fairfield, MT	6	6					
8/7/2024	Grader Operation Basics, Teton Co., Fairfield, MT	6	6					
9/5/2024	Flagging, MSU Police Dept.	9	9					9
9/17/2024	2024 Snow Rodeo; Fairgrounds, Richland Co.	30	30					
9/24/2024	2024 Snow Rodeo; Missoula Fairgrounds, Missoula, MT	48	33	15				
9/26/2024	Grader Operation Basics, Teton Co., Choteau, MT	8	8					
9/26/2024	Forklift training, Kalispell, MT	41		41				
9/27/2024	Flagging, Kalispell - FVCC	8						8
9/30/2024	Flagging, Highland College	47						47
9/30/2024	Flagging, Bozeman FD	13					13	
	TOTAL	184	22	85	0	0	77	1406

Focus Area: Organizational Excellence

To provide the best service possible to constituents, LTAP personnel seek and attend training and other professional development opportunities to improve their outreach capabilities. Activity in NLTAPA, APWA, NACE, and other organizations is supported and encouraged by FHWA Center for Local Aid Support (CLAS) and our partners.

Organizational excellence addresses professional development and leadership training for LTAP personnel. This also includes professional support of our staff through activities in nationally significant organizations, support of our customers and partners, and partnering efforts with our sponsoring agencies (FHWA, MDT, and MSU).

Examples of partnering efforts with sponsoring agencies include hosting the Asphalt Conference with MDT, annual meetings with FHWA, MSU statewide initiatives with the Western Transportation Institute and the Norm Asbjornson College of Engineering, and initiatives with FHWA such as Every Day Counts (EDC) and Build a Better Mousetrap (a celebration of local innovations).

Table 5 lists the activities attended this quarter.

Table 5: Organizational Excellence Activities in FY 25 Q1

Q1 Activities July-Sept 2024	
July 20-25	NLTAPA Annual Conference, Albuquerque, NM
Sept 29-Oct 4	Montana League of Cities and Towns, West Yellowstone, MT

We are working with FHWA, MDT and the Asphalt Institute on planning efforts for the 2025 Montana Asphalt Conference. Our role is to lead efforts of coordination, venue negotiation, registration, and records keeping. This looks to be another great opportunity for us to partner with these agencies and organizations.

In the last month of Q1, we have been working with MACRS to organize and prepare for the fall MACRS Trainings that will continue through Q2. The subject for these trainings is proposed to be “all about drainage.”

General Highlights

Other highlights of Montana LTAP's accomplishments during Q1 include:

- LTAP hosted 1 monthly webinars in Q1. When completed, recordings may be found here: https://www.ltap.montana.edu/mtltap/LTAP_Webinars.asp
 - July: Canceled due to LTAP conflict: travel
 - August: Mower Safety
 - September: Canceled due to LTAP conflict: travel
- LTAP Instructor-led classes included:
 - 4 Flagging classes
 - 2 classes in 3 days covering Road Grader Basics classes
 - 1 Confined Space training
 - 1 PASER and Gravel Roads training
 - 2 Trenching and Excavation Safety classes (with the Snow Rodeos)
 - Completed 2 Snow Rodeos with 78 total contestants.
 - NLTAPA Annual Meeting in New Mexico
 - 2 Skid Steer/Forklift classes
 - 3 days of Grader classes for Teton County
- Trainings were delivered in the following locations
 - Joliet (Carbon Co)
 - Sidney (Richland Co. 2days)
 - Missoula (2days)
 - Bozeman MSU Police Dept
 - Kalispell - FVCC
 - Butte: Highland College
 - Bozeman FD
 - Hamilton (City, 2days)
 - Kalispell (Flathead County)
 - Fairfield (Teton Co. 2days)
 - Choteau (Teton Co)

Challenges

- MT LTAP is working to accommodate multiple on-demand requests for grader training. Scheduling is a challenge as grader courses are best delivered when there is moisture on the roads. This quarter was complicated by unseasonably dry conditions coupled with counties' commitments to other summer infrastructure projects. Q2 will be dominated with snow operations preparations and Fall MACRS trainings, but we are striving towards including a class on Motor Grader operations. We plan to resume scheduling the hands-on classes as requested in spring (Q3).

Planned Activities for Q2 (OCT-DEC 2024)

- Our next Montana LTAP Advisory Board meeting will be in Helena, at the MDT Office on October 21, 2024

- MACRS Fall Classes are planned as follows:

October 8, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Yellowstone County Shop, 3321 King Avenue East, Billings, MT 59101

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

October 9, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Western Transportation Institute 3rd Floor Classroom, 2327 University Way,
Bozeman, MT

Subject TBD

October 10, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Volunteer Hall, 25 Little Boulder Road, Boulder, MT 59632

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

October 29, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Richland County Extension Office, 1499 N Central Ave, Sidney, MT 59270

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

October 30, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Miles City Community College | MMC Room 106, 2715 Dickinson St, Miles City, MT
59301

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

October 31, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Fergus County Weed Department, 185 Armory Road, Lewistown, MT 59457

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

Registration Link:

November 19, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Chinook, Location TBD,

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

November 20, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Cutbank TBD

Subject TBD

November 21, 2024 [8:00am-2pm]

Ravalli Co. Road and Bridge Department, 244 Fairgrounds Road, Hamilton, MT
59840

All Things Drainage [Elective/Optional Road Scholar Credit]

Financial Summary

The year-to-date budget summary for Q1 SFY 2025 is provided in Table 6.

Table 6: Year to Date Budget Summary, Q1 SFY 2025

Cost Categories	Quarterly Budget	Costs this Quarter	Annual Budget	Costs to Date
Salaries/Benefits	85,495.50	65,097.49	341,982.00	65,097.49
Prof. Services	4,250.00	-	17,000.00	-
Travel	3,500.00	-	14,000.00	-
Supplies/Comm.	3,500.00	38.14	14,000.00	38.14
Total Direct Costs	96,745.50	65,135.63	386,982.00	65,135.63
IDCs	28,254.50	18,982.47	113,018.00	18,982.47
TOTAL	125,000.00	84,118.10	500,000.00	84,118.10

Previous SFY 2025 quarters are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Budget Summaries for Q1 - SFY 2025

SUMMARY: Q1 SFY 2025

Cost Categories	Annual Budget	Costs to Date (Q1)
Salaries/Benefits	341,982.00	65,097.49
Prof. Services	17,000.00	-
Travel	14,000.00	-
Supplies/Comm.	14,000.00	38.14
Total Direct Costs	386,982.00	65,135.63
IDCs	113,018.00	18,982.47
TOTAL	500,000.00	84,118.10