



# LESLIE BLACK



PRINCIPAL PLANNER | ASSOCIATE

## OVERVIEW

Ms. Black has over 20 years experience in marketing, public outreach, meeting planning and facilitation, and project management. She has extensive experience in facilitating public involvement projects by working with stakeholders, facilitating meetings, utilizing media sources, and editing public outreach materials. Her public involvement work has emphasized user-friendly and accessible outreach materials for diverse stakeholders including translating materials into other languages. Her experience includes preparing and presenting technical project analyses to stakeholders, making educational in-service presentations, assisting with the preparation and facilitation of academic symposiums, and planning and facilitating public meetings for various organizations.

### COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

Ms. Black's focus and experience is in working with the general public to address issues in consensus-building efforts. As a skilled community organizer, she is adept at planning and chairing public meetings and stakeholder focus groups, organizing events, making presentations, and building and working with effective committees. Ms. Black specializes in creating user-friendly newsletters, flyers, websites, and media releases to inform and involve the public in projects. Outreach efforts have included transportation, planning, and environmental documentation projects.

## PROJECT EXPERIENCE

### TRAFFIC DIVERSION PLAN FOR I-84, PARTS OF US ROUTE 7, AND CT ROUTE 8 | CONNECTICUT | 2010

Ms. Black was involved in the coordination of the stakeholder outreach process for this study to develop emergency diversion plans for major expressways in the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (DEMHS) Region 5. This was a multi-agency effort that included DEMHS in collaboration with the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley (COGCNV), Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) and Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials (LHCEO) and the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). The primary goal of the study was to shorten response time to incidents on expressways in the region and achieve lane clearance with the greatest speed, safety and efficiency by having a plan in place to divert traffic to alternate routes.

Input from stakeholders at the state, regional, and local level required effective coordination and communication between the study team and stakeholders in order to successfully advance the study. Meetings included Technical Advisory Committee meetings as well as face-to-face stakeholder outreach meetings with elected officials and emergency management personnel from the 18 towns along the 88-mile study corridor. The goal of the municipal outreach was to present preliminary diversion plans to town officials and solicit feedback based on their knowledge of the local roadway system and existing travel patterns. In addition to the municipal outreach meetings, the study team met with state police and the CTDOT. The outreach meetings were invaluable in obtaining data and input, including diversion routes revisions, development of diversion routes for hazmat incidents, and legend/symbology changes, in order to refine the final product.

### EDUCATION

- Bachelor of Commerce, Marketing, University of British Columbia, 1984

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS)

### YEARS EXPERIENCE

- 5 Years with firm
- 20 Years in industry



**NORTHEAST NEW JERSEY METRO MOBILITY STUDY | BERGEN AND PASSAIC COUNTIES, NJ | 2009-ONGOING**

Ms. Black is collaborating with the study team led by New Jersey Transit in coordination with North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) and Coach USA to examine the existing bus transit network and service, identify areas of improvement, and recommend options for meeting the current and future needs of the residents and employees of the greater Bergen-Passaic County Region in northern New Jersey. Ms. Black's role in the public involvement task is to identify key stakeholders in the study area including major employers and conduct interviews to collect input into the study process. In addition to a study webpage, a unique outreach tool employed for this study is the development of an information kiosk at local malls where area citizens are surveyed for input about current and future transit service needs.

**SOUTH NORWALK CT RAIL STATION INTERMODAL FACILITY STUDY | SOUTH NORWALK, CT | 2008**

Ms. Black was involved in the public outreach task for this study led by the Norwalk Transit District. The project goal was to provide a functional, cost-effective fully integrated intermodal facility in the City of Norwalk at the South Norwalk Railroad Station that met all environmental, operational, building and fiscal requirements. Ms. Black's roles included conducting a public outreach program that was truly inclusive for a diverse group of stakeholders including neighborhood residents, commuters, local businesses and the City as a whole. One-on-one stakeholder interviews early in the outreach process identified community leaders and avenues for disseminating information effectively. Translation of study newsletters and meeting announcements into Spanish further facilitated the public outreach process. A dedicated study website and public media announcements provided information about the study.

**MOHAWK-ERIE MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION STUDY | ALBANY, NY TO BUFFALO, NY | 2009-ONGOING**

Ms. Black is involved in the public outreach task for this study, a multimodal transportation study of a 400-mile vital trade corridor in New York between the greater Buffalo and Albany regions. Development of and coordination with both corridor-wide and regional advisory committees as well as outreach to state, regional, and local stakeholders is a critical aspect of the public outreach process in this large study corridor. Ms. Black has worked to build committee involvement in the study, disseminate study information in a timely manner, and coordinate meeting venues and materials, including briefing packets and study website information.

**BUCKLAND AREA STUDY-PROJECT MANAGEMENT | SOUTH WINDSOR/MANCHESTER, CT | 2006-2009**

Ms. Black was part of the study team responsible for managing a comprehensive agency and community outreach process that was critical to the success of the Buckland Area Transportation planning study. The study, initiated by the Connecticut Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Capitol Region Council of Governments, was conducted in response to increasing traffic congestion in the Buckland Hills area located on the South Windsor / Manchester, Connecticut town line. FHI used many approaches to engage agencies and the community, including an advisory committee, a technical working group, and numerous stakeholder focus groups and public meetings. FHI employed a variety of creative outreach tools, including an interactive website [www.bucklandstudy.org](http://www.bucklandstudy.org), as well as project information posters at mall kiosks and project website business cards that were distributed within shopping malls and other local stores during the holiday season to help publicize the project and generate interest.

**NORTHWEST CORRIDOR TRANSIT STUDY | CONNECTICUT | 2007-2010**

Fitzgerald & Halliday worked with the Capital Region Council of Governments to undertake a study to preserve the viability of the Griffin (or northwest) corridor for future busway deployment. This study examined employment, demographic, and travel characteristics of the corridor and developed a service plan to provide improved transit to the Day Hill Road area. As part of this focus, FHI was responsible for determining employee transit use, assessing park and ride facility usage and demand, and potential need in the Day Hill Road area. Ms. Black conducted numerous stakeholder outreach interviews and outreach results analysis as part of this usage and needs assessment.



**NEW YORK-VERMONT BI-STATE INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL STUDY | VERMONT AND NEW YORK | 2011-ONGOING**

Ms. Black is part of a study team working with the Vermont Agency of Transportation and New York State Department of Transportation, in coordination with the Federal Railroad Administration, to identify and establish intercity passenger rail service to benefit parts of southwestern Vermont and eastern central New York that are currently un-served or underserved. Ms. Black is working with the study team to manage a public involvement program for this study. She has developed a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to seek input from the communities, key stakeholders, and the traveling public. Outreach tools include an interactive study website to present information and gather feedback from the public. Stakeholder meetings and public workshops at key milestones throughout the study provide numerous opportunities for discussion and comment. An active media outreach strategy provides an additional mechanism for informing the public about the study. Public opinion and comments are being documented and considered in the development of study recommendations.

**NJTPA PERFORMANCE RESULTS STUDY | NORTHERN NJ | 2009-2010**

Ms. Black was involved in the stakeholder involvement/coordination task for this study. NJTPA hired a consultant team to assist with the development of performance measures that can be used by municipalities to make better planning decisions in the future. Ahead of the federal transportation reauthorization, this project resulted in a policy guidebook, including the application of performance measures across a sampling of projects, to be used by the fifteen NJTPA subregions to make future projects more successful. Over the course of this 18-month study, FHI led interagency coordination and stakeholder outreach efforts, Agencies that were involved with this project include the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJ DOT), New Jersey Transit, New Jersey Turnpike Authority, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), as well as representatives from each of NJTPA subregions. Stakeholder involvement/coordination activities included the following: regular coordination with the project's Technical Advisory Committee; and face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders from relevant agencies and NJTPA jurisdictions. FHI also planned and facilitated a half-day, interactive workshop with NJTPA's Regional Transportation Advisory Committee.

**VERMONT STATEWIDE FREIGHT PLAN | VERMONT | 2009-2011** - Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc was part of a consultant team to develop a statewide freight plan for Vermont. The previous State Freight Plan was developed in 2000 and FHI contributed to that effort as well. FHI's specific role is public information and outreach. Ms. Black worked with a study Advisory Committee to develop a comprehensive list of freight stakeholders. A series of focus groups were organized and conducted with these stakeholders at different locations throughout the state to gather input on freight issues and opportunities. Communication to freight stakeholders and the general public was facilitated by an e-bulletin to report on plan issues and progress. A regional roundtable with shippers, receivers, freight operators, economic development officials and planners convened to review and fine-tune the plan in the spring of 2011.

**ROUTE 7 TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE STUDY | SOUTHWESTERN CT | 2009-ONGOING**

Ms. Black serves as task manager for the Public Involvement element of this study, a transportation and land use analysis to identify gaps in the transportation infrastructure along this 15-mile regional artery. She has collaborated to develop a dedicated study website, maintain a study contact list to inform stakeholders of all public events, and coordinate Advisory Committee meetings, stakeholder focus area workshops, and public information meetings.

**MYSTIC MOBILITY STUDY | MYSTIC, CT | 2009-2011**

Ms. Black was the FHI project manager for the public outreach task of this study led by the Town of Stonington, Town of Groton, and Mystic Seaport Museum to investigate how to improve the movement of people and vehicles to enhance the experience of those who live, work or visit in the Mystic, Connecticut area. Ms. Black's role included the development of a public involvement plan with specific tasks that included building and maintaining a dedicated study website and contact mailing list, coordinating Advisory Committee and public meetings, and coordinating cluster focus groups with key stakeholders. Another public outreach facet of this study was the





development of a public relations strategy/campaign to build local support for federal-aid project funding for recommended transportation improvements that by necessity entail some municipal financial commitment. Tools used to build public interest and support for the study aside from study meetings and website included distribution of study fact sheets, newsletters, and news media press releases.

### **ADDITIONAL PROJECT EXPERIENCE**

- I-280 Ramp Improvements Study (Ongoing)
- NJTPA Visualization Tools Study (Ongoing)
- Massachusetts Freight and Rail Plan (2010)
- Waterbury & New Canaan Branch Lines Needs & Feasibility Study, CT (2010)
- Vermont Rail Policy Plan (2007)
- Vermont Western Corridor Transportation Management Plan (2009)
- I-95 South Corridor Study, MA (2009)
- Route 44 Corridor Study, Bolton, CT (2007)
- Connectivity Plan Study, Norwalk, CT (2010)
- I-587 Intersection Study, Kingston, NY (2010)

