

City of Lincoln: Public Works

Mid-America Transportation Center

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8/1/2014

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MATC Short Essay
August 1, 2014

This is the second consecutive year that I have been a part of the Mid-America Transportation Center summer intern program. I work in the Engineering Services division of the Public Works department of the City of Lincoln. I have continued to gain experience and knowledge through examples from my superiors, as well as from my fellow interns and independently. The City of Lincoln has given me a look into the public sector of Civil Engineering and everything that goes into it.



Figure 1: North side of the SW 40th Street viaduct project

This summer I began my internship a couple of weeks late due to the fact that I was at my home in Sioux Falls, South Dakota sick for about five weeks. During this time, I missed the final three weeks of the spring semester and the first two weeks of my job with the City. This presented me with a challenge.

Not only did I have to try and regain my health, but I had to finish my four incomplete classes (still in progress), and continue to work

a full-time internship as well as a part-time job. So I have been quite busy all summer.

When I arrived, I was placed under the supervision of Mark Miller (project manager), and he put me to work on the SW 40th street viaduct between West O and West A streets. The viaduct project kept me



Figure 2: South side of the SW 40th Street viaduct

busy for most of the month of June with inspection work, as well as checking the moisture content of soils from time to time. However, once July began, the project slowed quite a bit, and there was just not enough to do for three separate inspectors on a daily basis. So, while looking for new work, Kris Humphries told me she needed help with the sidewalk restoration project, which two fellow interns were already working on. This project consists of over 4,500 locations within Lincoln where there was a complaint filed, dating back to the early '90s. Our job as interns is to take 30-40 addresses at a time and drive to each location and determine whether or not the sidewalk defect has been repaired or not, and if not, determine the severity of the defect. In order to reduce travel time, we needed a systematic way to sort the addresses by location. This is a must, since I got the city's most fuel efficient vehicle to roll around Lincoln in...a 2001 Chevrolet Suburban. The sidewalk project can get monotonous, and sometimes I felt like it was just busy work that is pawned off on the interns, but after visiting with the office supervisor, Thomas Shafer, he made me feel that my job is much more important to the city than it seems, and I am grateful for that.

Another valuable thing that I experienced during my internship this summer was the MATC field trip where we were able to experience the inner workings of a few of the sponsor companies for MATC interns. As I am a part of the City of Lincoln, I was asked to collaborate with the other interns to make a small power point presentation to explain our positions within the City office. I found Felsburg, Holt and Ullevig to be the most interesting stop on the field trip. Since I have had two summers working in the public sector of civil engineering, it was beneficial for me to learn more about how the private sector works and what they can offer compared to the public sector. The field trip definitely made me excited about my future as a civil engineer.

I am grateful to Thomas Shafer and the City of Lincoln for helping me to gain valuable experience that I need to help me continue my education and work towards my goal of becoming a licensed professional civil engineer. I will always value the support and guidance I have received from the great people that I have worked with over the past two summers, and I hope that I continue to have a working relationship with the City of Lincoln.