

## CASE STUDY

# For the City of Meriden, Transportation Innovation is a Top Priority

### CHALLENGE

In order to remain compliant on DOT-funded municipality projects, the public works department in the City of Meriden used a robust Four Volume method that often led to time-consuming project slowdowns.

### SOLUTION

In order to streamline this process, Director of Public Works Howard Weissberg, P.E., and his team vetted a number of software solutions and landed on **Appia**® for construction administration and inspection.

### RESULTS

Piloting Appia on the large Pratt Street Traffic Improvement project led to improved project management and data reporting, cost savings, and more time for inspectors in the field.

#### Before Appia

4 hours in the field | 4 hours in the office

#### After Appia

7 hours in the field | 1 hour in the office



# Mired in Paper Processes, Howard Weissberg Sought a Way Out

**H**oward Weissberg, P.E., is the Director of Public Works for the City of Meriden, a town of about 60,000 in Connecticut, not far from New Haven. Responsible for infrastructure management and capital projects like paving, culvert installation, signal replacement, etc., many of the Public Works projects are funded by the state DOT. To manage these projects, Weissberg and his team use the required, paper-based Four Volume method that includes daily work

reports, contract items, quantity computations, and miscellaneous contract data.

While Weissberg recognized the value of the consistent, well-documented method, the cons kept piling up: duplication of effort, greater opportunity for errors, long term storage, auditing challenges, etc. It quickly became clear that a software solution would allow the City of Meriden to remain compliant while streamlining their existing process.

**“The challenge of the Four Volume method is you have to do enough of it to figure it out, because there are a lot of intricacies and dynamics. There are so many processes that if you don’t do it routinely, you don’t know how to do it.”**

HOWARD WEISSBERG, P.E.,  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS,  
CITY OF MERIDEN, CT

# The Next Step? Embracing e-Construction Innovation

In recent years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has put an increasing focus on e-Construction solutions as a way to improve our nation's infrastructure. To that end, State Transportation Innovation Councils (STICs) are set up in every state, with the purpose of providing STIC Grants to offset the costs of innovative practices in state transportation agencies.

To fund their Appia implementation, the City of Meriden planned to take advantage of this savvy FHWA initiative.

“We did some evaluations and came across Appia and realized this was something that met our needs better than most of the packages available. So we put together a Transportation Innovations Grant with the state for utilizing Appia for construction.”

HOWARD WEISSBERG, P.E., DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF MERIDEN, CT

After presenting to Connecticut DOT and FHWA officials, the City of Meriden was awarded a **\$13,000 grant** to use Appia for a two-year pilot program for **\$15 million in State-funded projects**. The software would also be used by VHB, the engineering consultants employed by the City of Meriden.



## Implementing Appia on the Pratt Street Project

Weissberg and the team at VHB first implemented Appia on the Pratt Street Traffic Improvement project that involved converting 4,300 ft of arterial roadway from 4-lane undivided to 2-lane divided with raised medians. The goals of the project were to reduce speed, increase pedestrian access, and provide an attractive gateway to downtown Meriden.

To determine if Appia would provide a consistent solution moving forward, the City would test the software against three desired results: Enhanced Project Management, Cost Savings, and Reduced Level of Effort. How did it stack up?

## Enhanced Project Management

“If you have to research an issue (we had a utility issue where a contractor hit an unmarked conduit) having all that information available at your fingertips without having to go back through stacks of paper is fantastic.”

“It’s great to give a snapshot of where the project is at to elected officials.”

## Cost Savings

“[Inspectors] don’t have to rewrite anything. All their notes are in there. Your greater savings will be on projects where there are multiple inspectors on the job, because collating that information is very complicated, this makes it very simple.”

## Reduced Effort

“It’s a very intuitive system, so as long as you know the basics of construction management, you have a pretty good idea of what’s going on.”

“Daily reports are the best. [We love] being able to use the Mobile Inspector® app to take photos and document what’s going on in the job on a daily basis.”

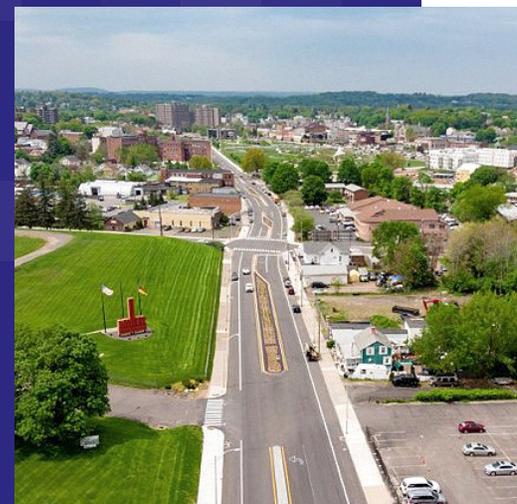
Moving forward, the City of Meriden hopes to increase Appia usage locally to draw from a bigger pool of practitioners as they continue to streamline their construction administration process.

# The Finished Product



BEFORE

Photos courtesy of VHB

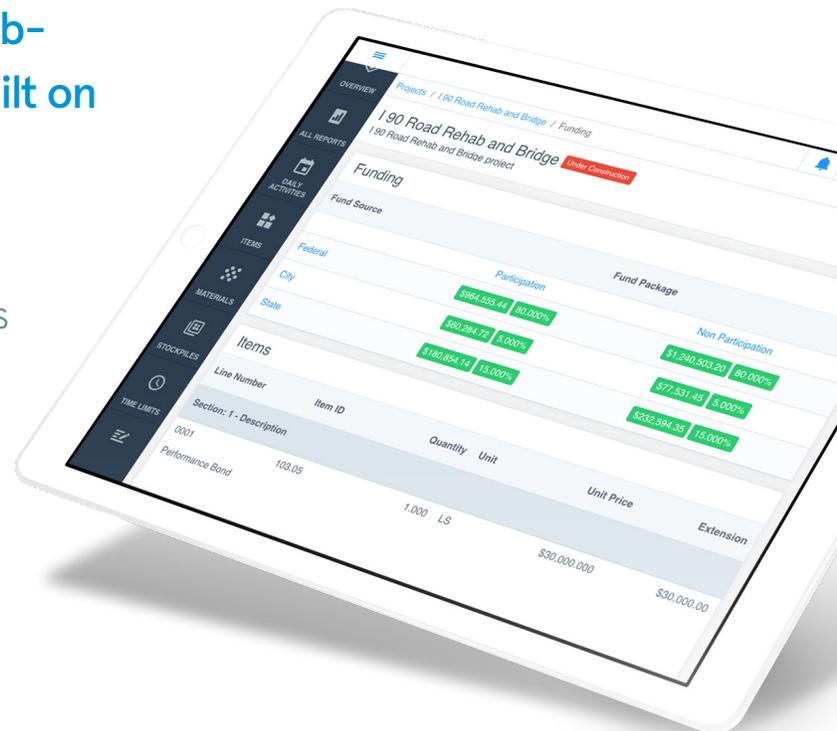


AFTER

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