Expediting Project Delivery Webinar – Agency Commitments to Internal Coordination and Delivery

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David Williams, FHWA
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Paul O’Brien, Arizona DOT

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SHRP2 & Its Focus Areas

**Safety:** Fostering safer driving through analysis of driver, roadway and vehicle factors in crashes, near crashes, and ordinary driving.

**Renewal:** Rapid maintenance and repair of the deteriorating infrastructure using already-available resources, innovations, and technologies.

**Capacity:** Planning and designing a highway system that offers minimum disruption and meets the environmental, and economic needs of the community.

**Reliability:** Reducing congestion and creating more predictable travel times through better operations.
Expediting Project Delivery

- Expediting Project Delivery identifies 24 strategies for addressing or avoiding 16 common constraints in order to speed delivery of transportation projects.

- Strategies Grouped Under Six Objectives:
  1. Improve internal communication and coordination;
  2. Streamline decision-making;
  3. Improve resource agency involvement and collaboration;
  4. Improve public involvement and support;
  5. Demonstrate real commitment to the project; and
  6. Coordinate work across phases of project delivery.
## Expediting Project Delivery

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Implementation Award Recipients

- Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)
- Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD)
- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG)
- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Idaho Transportation Department (ITD)
- Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG)
- Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT)
- Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR)
- South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)
- South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT)
- Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans)
SHRP2 on the Web

- **GoSHRP2**
  [www.fhwa.dot.gov/GoSHRP2](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/GoSHRP2)
  Apply for Implementation assistance

- **Learn how practitioners are using SHRP2 products**

- **SHRP2 @AASHTO**
  [http://SHRP2.transportation.org](http://SHRP2.transportation.org)
  Implementation information for AASHTO members

- **SHRP2 @TRB**
  [www.TRB.org/SHRP2](http://www.TRB.org/SHRP2)
  Research information

- **FHWA C19 Website**
  [https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/st rmLng/shrp2-c19/default.asp](https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/st rmLng/shrp2-c19/default.asp)
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A Self-Assessment on Project Delivery in Arkansas

Elisha Wright-Kehner, P.E.
Arkansas Department of Transportation
Why Expediting Project Delivery (C19)?

C19 Strategies Targeted:
• Improve Public Involvement and Support
• Improve Resource Agency Involvement and Collaboration
• Demonstrate Real Commitment to the Project
• Improve Internal Communication and Coordination
• Streamline Decision Making
• Integrate Across all Phases of Project Delivery
History in Arkansas

• Award Date - October 17, 2013
• Awarded - $50,000
• Assessment Workshop - $20,000
Expediting Project Delivery – Assessment Workshop

- Facilitated by FHWA on July 30-31, 2014
- 30 Attendees
- Topics
  - Overview of the Expediting Project Delivery and the Expediting Project Delivery Assessment Tool
  - Overview of “Current State” and “Desired State” of Project Development and Delivery Processes and Practices
  - Collaboration and Coordination Challenges and Opportunities
    - “What works well?”
    - “What needs work?”
What works well at ARDOT?

- Administration Open to Change
- Recent Organizational Changes
- Creation of Preliminary Engineering Squad
- Hiring Qualified Personnel
- Open Communication
- Improved Teamwork
- Good Relationship between ARDOT and FHWA
- Public Engagement
Challenges and Opportunities

• Project Development Process Documentation
  ➢ Personnel changes and work load
  ➢ Project Change Communication

• Early Project Decision Making:
  ➢ Defining the Purpose and Need
  ➢ Project Scoping

• Local Agencies Communication
  ➢ Need for standardization and streamline process
Action Plan

• Developed an Action Plan in March 2015 to facilitate the activities identified in the Workshop
• Five Steps of Implementation:
  ➢ Refine Scoping Procedure
  ➢ Enhancing Purpose and Need Statements
  ➢ Improving Information and Data
  ➢ Improving Internal and External Communication and Coordination
  ➢ Evaluating Resource Allocation
Refine Scoping Procedures

- A draft project initiation form
  - Developed in coordination with internal stakeholders.
  - Expected to be complete and approved in September 2016.
- Changes to the Project Initiation Form:
  - Incorporate the Project Initiation Form into the internal Staff Minutes.
  - This will reduce a duplication of efforts.
  - This will also allow each division to add, remove and update their part of the minutes as they deem necessary in real-time.
  - The Staff Minutes are used Department-wide and every employee has access to them. Updated within an Access Database.
Refine Scoping Procedures

• A project planning study process has been developed.
  ➢ This documented process will help ensure consistency, accuracy, and transparency of the decision making and scoping process.
  ➢ Planning study procedure manual. ARDOT is using the planning study procedures/guide on all new planning studies and this information is also provided to consultants that work on planning studies for ARDOT.
• A data-driven, performance-based approach to better identify system needs.
  ➢ These documented processes are being refined and updated.
• A project prioritization system has recently been implemented to assist decision makers on which projects to prioritize.
  ➢ The methods to quantify needs and outcomes will be refined.
Enhance Purpose and Need Statements

- The project planning study procedure manual will be modified and updated as needed to ensure project P&N statements are tied to the performance-based planning process.
- A data-driven, performance-based approach is being implemented to better identify system needs.
- A project prioritization system has recently been implemented to assist decision makers on which projects to prioritize.
- We conducted a NEPA and Enhanced Purpose and Need Training. Provide guide to consultants and starting communications with locals earlier in process.
- Environmental and planning staff are working more closely together on the purpose and need (more collaboration and communication).
Action Steps - 3

Improve Information Exchange and Data Sharing

• Improve Communication/Coordination (Internal and External)
  ➢ A comment documentation process has been recently created for planning studies.
  ➢ This process will be modified to better document comment resolutions, thereby improving the transparency and documentation of the decision-making process.

• Improve Resource Allocation (Internal and Consultant Staff)
  ➢ The Department’s consultant selection process will be updated in the near future to allow for stream-lined process for non-engineering services.
  ➢ TPP along with the Department’s Enterprise Data Committee, is currently testing the enterprise information warehouse that was recently established, to ensure that the server will indeed serve as our replication database department wide.
Facilitate Communication & Coordination

Training

- Alternative Development, Purpose and Needs Statements – 40 Attendees
- Technical Writing – 75 Attendees
- Public Involvement – 18 Attendees
- NEPA and Enhanced Purpose and Need Training.
Facilitate Communication & Coordination

• Development of a Local Public Agency Manual
  ➢ Completing Date of Winter 2017

• Increased the tracking and disbursement of project related information after all supplemental staff meetings.

• Still in the process of creating a line of communication for tribes, local public officials, and affected landowners to use throughout the project development process.

• Transportation Planning & Policy Division (TPP) has been working more collaboratively with other divisions – not just Environmental, but also Roadway Design, Maintenance, etc. Better communication at the staff level expedites project delivery.
Evaluate resource allocation

• Utilize the Department’s Achieving Career Excellence (ACE) program to assist in training on all of these new processes and procedures.
  ➢ First year of evaluations will be completed October 2017.
• Still developing a plan on Managing Consultant Resources.
• TPP Division has been working with the Consultant Contracts office to modify the Department’s Consultant Selection Procedures to allow for non-design related services (currently, the Department has procedures intended for engineering services only). Having a simpler procedure would expedite project delivery.
Steps Forward

• Incorporate the Project Initiation Form into our Staff Minutes.
• Buy in from all participants.
• Develop training programs on the ACE platform.
• Update the process to allow for stream-lined process for non-engineering services.
• Create an on-line format for tribes, local public officials, and affected landowners to use throughout the project development process.
• Establish a rotational program to improve coordination between all Divisions.
• Develop and implement a plan on Managing Consultant Resources.
Overall

• Assessment Workshop Successful

• Opportunities for Improvement Identified and started to implement these improvements

• Increased Communications
  ➢ Internal
  ➢ External
Lessons Learned

• The constant turnover of employees makes it difficult to complete tasks that are handed off each time a person changes positions.

• Employee workloads also have a large impact on task completion.

• Rome wasn’t built in a day.
Arkansas Contacts and References

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Quick Reference Guide for expediting project delivery of Local Public Agency (LPA) Federal-Aid Projects

Paul O’Brien, P.E.
Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)
Overview – ADOT Process for FAHP

- The **LPA** is the project sponsor and has staff and consultants.
- The ADOT **LPA Section** is tasked with the administration of LPAs.
- ADOT **Project Management Group** oversees Design (Project Admin.)
- ADOT **Environmental Planning** is responsible for NEPA compliance (LPA prepares) - can’t be delegated.
- ADOT **Technical Groups**
- More “layers” of agencies and staff than an “ADOT Project”
ADOT is a recipient of SHRP2 Implementation Assistance Program for *Expediting Project Delivery* (Report C19)

SHRP2 research areas focused on:

- *Renewal, Safety, Reliability, and;*
- *Capacity* – develop approaches and tools for systematically integrating environmental … into the analysis, planning, and design of new highway capacity

ADOT’s SHRP2 project was based on “*Capacity*” within Report C19

The report identified 24 “strategies” for addressing 16 common “constraints” to speed up delivery of transportation projects.
ADOT’s SHRP2 project focused on two constraints outlined in Report C19:

- **Constraint 16** – “*unusually large scale and complex program*”
  - The LPA Program is a large scale and complex program

- **Constraint 5** – “*ineffective internal communication*”
  - Ineffective internal and external communication impacts the delivery of the LPA Program
Purpose of ADOT’s SHRP2 Project

- SHRP2’s 24 “strategies” were considered
- ADOT’s SHRP2 project utilized one strategy theme outlined in Report C19:
  - Strategy 21 – “Strategic readiness and oversight assessment”
    - Program and project management protocols.
    - Streamlined environmental review through agreements
- ADOT’s goal for use of the SHRP2 assistance was to provide a project development tool for expediting LPA project delivery in lieu of formal agreements outlined in Strategy 21
- Holistic approach with focus on overall administration
  - Better overall administration leads to improved environmental review
General Eisenhower - Supreme Allied Commander in WWII

Promoted over many senior Generals (“SMEs”) – Why?

He was recognized for his skills as a:
- Collaborator
- Communicator
- Coordinator

Supply trucks and bulldozers win wars, not just tanks
- Logistics and administration
- “Basics” underlying the glorious
Sample LPA Project – “Why did it take a year to do the CE?”

2013 –

**November** - LPA initiated project

**December 9** – FHWA authorized PE funds

2014 –

**August 19** – LPA asked for the status of the environmental. There was no awareness of the project at Environmental Planning. When did it start? No one communicating?

**September 9** – Environmental Planning informed the PM that they need basic project information to prepare a clearance

**November 14** – Environmental Planning sent an email to the LPA Section noting that they had been *waiting* for the a scope of work. Why the wait?

**November 25** – CE was prepared and sent to LPA Section for project info confirmation

**December 15** – CE was approved
ADOT LPA Section has developed the **Local Public Agency Project Manual** which provides information and guidance for FAHP delivery – Informative but large

Many basic things have to be “learned” with each new project:

- What are the steps?
- Who is responsible for what?
- Who needs to communicate to who?
- Can the LPA consultant communicate with ADOT directly?
- Initial consultant scope of work is inadequate (or even over-done).
- Additional scope identified, but the need not timely communicated.
- Project work on the project is delayed or stops until the funds are available.
We needed a new tool to help bridge the gaps for managing project development in the LPA Program and improving communication.
Addressing the Constraints

Quick Reference Guidance (QRG)

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE
FOR EXPEDITING PROJECT DELIVERY OF
LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY (LPA) FEDERAL-AID PROJECTS

This guide was developed by the Arizona Department of Transportation
in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration as a SHRP2 product for Expediting Project Delivery
Addressing the Constraints

- The **Quick Reference Guidance (QRG)** was developed to present simplified strategies of the project development process.

- The **QRG** quickly conveys key points of the ADOT Local Public Agency Projects Manual.

- The **QRG** serves the LPA PMs, ADOT PMs, consultants, and everyone involved in the LPA projects.

- Throughout the **QRG** responsible parties identified with different colors

- Throughout the **QRG** communication and coordination between all the players emphasized
The **QRG** identifies the flow of the delegation authority.
- ADOT delegates administration of FAHP either through Self–Administration Agreement (SA) or Certification Acceptance Agreement (CA).
The **QRG** presents an overview of the anticipated timelines for the project development process including NEPA Approval and ADOT Environmental Clearance.

### Overview: ADOT Project Development Process

- **Planning & Programming:** 7-14 Months
- **Scoping:**
  - **Development/Design (18-24 Months):**
    - **Stage I:** 15% (Utility and Railroad Clearances)
    - **Stage II:** 30% (Environmental Process)
    - **Stage III:** 60% (Right-of-Way Clearance)
    - **Stage IV:** 95%
    - **Stage V:** 100% (PS + E’s)
- **Construction:**

  - NEPA Approval
  - ADOT Environmental Clearance
The **QRG** highlights “Key Points” in the process

Clarifies the definitions and actions involved with the NEPA Approval and ADOT Environmental Clearance

**NEPA APPROVAL AND ADOT ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE:**

**NEPA Approval** and the **ADOT Environmental Clearance** for final approval of environmental actions are separate approval steps.

**NEPA Approval** is the completion of the federal NEPA process as indicated by the approval of a CE, Environmental Assessment (EA), or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The NEPA Approval date is also the date after which FHWA can authorize right-of-way (ROW) acquisition and construction funding.

**ADOT Environmental Clearance** is an internal ADOT approval document sent from Environmental Planning to ADOT Contracts and Specifications Section for an ADOT construction administered project, to certify that the environmental process and documentation is complete, has been approved by the responsible agencies, and that the project is ready to advertise for bid.

The Environmental Clearance can be issued concurrently or after the NEPA Approval date.
The QRG introduces a New Step in the process:
- Notification of the project initiation and identification of the ADOT Environmental Planner early on
The QRG highlights that consultant procurement is dependent on the type of project administration.

The QRG introduces a **New Step** in the process: ADOT Environmental Planner can review the consultant proposal.

**KEY POINT:** In addition to the ADOT PM and LPA PM, ADOT Environmental Planners can review proposals from an environmental perspective. Though not required, LPAs that are CA and SA can send their project’s scope of work to ADOT Environmental Planning for review to ensure that it is not under or over-scope.
The QRG stresses that ADOT Environmental Planning involvement in LPA projects can begin as early as preliminary scoping during planning and programming phase.

ADOT encourages LPAs to conduct preliminary scoping early and as thoroughly as possible to evaluate cost estimates before the projects are included in a TIP to ensure that sufficient funding is secured.

ADOT Environmental Planning can be contacted during scoping pre-TIP and post-TIP to provide assistance on NEPA requirements.
Preliminary Engineering, the environmental review process, and NEPA approval occur within the Development/Design Phase.

Various environmental analysis may be required and coordination between disciplines is essential.

Identifying and managing the project critical path, meaning accounting for the “other environmental laws” such as NHPA, ESA, CWA, Section 4(f), is also essential, because these typically dictate the environmental component of a project schedule. Communicate changes to the Project Team.
Coordination and Communication

There are many different stakeholders that make up the project team, and each play a key role throughout the LPA project development process. Communication between all players is essential in order to stay on schedule and within budget.

Coordination and communication between all key players should be constant and ongoing throughout project development. When a project requires a change of scope or an environmental issue arises, notify the design team. These issues may affect schedule, budget, and/or scope.

APM - ADOT Project Manager
CEP - Consultant Environmental Planner
AEP - ADOT Environmental Planner
CPM - Consultant Project Manager
The QRG introduces a New Step in the process:

- Creating a *communication protocol* upfront for all projects, so all team members know the communication chain.

The **QRG** lays out the steps to be taken when communication breakdown occurs. Don’t wait!

- LPAs and consultants are encouraged to consult the ADOT Environmental Planning Quality Control Plan. [http://azdot.gov/business/environmental-planning/additional-resources](http://azdot.gov/business/environmental-planning/additional-resources)

- The approach to project should always be to keep quality in mind from the beginning.
Challenge – expediting environmental review for LPA Program

ADOT SHRP2 took a holistic approach to the solution – Look at “constraints” in overall process not just “environmental”

QRG created as a tool for all members of a Project Team

QRG – easy access to key points of the process

- Emphasize earlier involvement of key Project Team staff
- Emphasize early scoping and budgets to support Design
- Emphasis on the importance of communication – connected Project Team to overcome additional “layers” with LPA Projects
- Highlight Key Points for easy access to Project Team

Result: Expediting Project Delivery
Arizona DOT Contacts and References

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**Additional Information:**

FHWA (SHRP2) C19 Product: Expediting Project Delivery
https://www.environment fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/shrp2-c19/default.asp

ADOT Environmental Planning Website
https://www.azdot.gov/business/environmental-planning
Questions?

Please remember to type in your questions to the question prompt.

Thank you for participating!
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