

DESIGN MEMORANDUM NO. 4-98

TO: Chief District Engineers
Active Consultants
Design Engineers

FROM: John B. Sacksteder, P.E.
Director, Division of Highway Design

DATE: January 8, 1998

SUBJECT: Empower Kentucky Directions

As was recently discussed with the District Branch Managers for Preconstruction, following is documentation of items that have been identified for the revised operation of the Project Development Process. Except where otherwise listed, all items are considered as already implemented as part of the Department's process.

In general, all authority for a project will be invested in a District Project Development Team (DPDT) which will be assigned prior to project inception by the Chief District Engineer. At a minimum the DPDT will consist of District representation from Design, Right-of-Way, Utilities, Construction, Traffic, Operations and other staff as deemed necessary by the Chief District Engineer. Central Office Location Engineers are to be assigned to the PDT on all projects that have total funding greater than \$1 million, are considered controversial, or involve any special designs. The Location Engineers may be involved in other projects as requested by the DPDT. Other Central Office staff, such as Division of Traffic or Bridge personnel should be made part of the team where deemed appropriate by the DPDT. The Federal Highway Administration shall be part of the team on all National Highway System projects with construction costs greater than \$1 million. When a consultant is selected for a project, the firm's Project Manager shall also be considered part of the PDT.

PHASE I DESIGN/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The District Pre-Construction Engineer/Project Manager will be directly responsible for initiating all public meetings, hearings or other public involvement as early as feasible in the design process. Following the identification of study alignments, the DPDT will develop a list of potentially affected property owners. A meeting with identified potential property owners will be held in the project area. The DPDT will explain the project purpose and need and describe the study alignments. The meeting will be an open exchange of information and the team will solicit property owner comments and questions and shall take notes and develop records of the issues discussed. Subsequent meetings will be held by the DPDT as deemed necessary, in addition to any required formal Public Hearing. The goal this activity is to openly communicate with potentially affected property owners regarding proposed projects and to obtain their input as plans are developed. Contacts made by Consultants shall be documented to the DPDT. Notification of all public meetings or hearings shall be given in advance to the Public Hearing Coordinator.

All authority for scheduling and holding meetings and hearings or offering the opportunity for hearings is vested in the DPDT. No approval or authorization for holding or offering the opportunity for the hearings or meetings is

required from the Central Office. When required on federally funded projects, the public hearing shall be held no later than 60 days after the District is advised of the approval of the environmental document. The Public Hearing Report containing the hearing transcript, summary of all comments received, and necessary recommendations shall be sent to the Public Hearing Coordinator no later than 45 days after the hearing was held.

The DPDT shall also be responsible for advertising the Location Approval for all federally funded projects after the final environmental document receives approval. The DPDT will advertise the Location Approval of a project no later than 30 days after receipt of notification of the environmental approval (Categorical Exclusion, FONSI, or EIS). No concurrence or authorization is required from the Central Office for this advertisement. Copies of the advertisement shall be sent to the Public Hearing Coordinator.

PRE-DESIGN CONFERENCES, INSPECTIONS, MEETINGS, ETC.

The DPDT will be responsible for setting all dates for inspections, pre-design conferences, special meetings, etc. In setting such dates, it will be the DPDT's responsibility to confirm that needed participants outside of the DPDT, such as FHWA, Location Engineers, or others are available for the meetings or to weigh the importance of having those members present at the meeting if the timeliness of the meeting or inspection may be deemed more important.

The Designer of each project, District staff or consultant, shall be responsible for sending out the minutes of each meeting or inspection. Minutes of each meeting or inspection should be routinely sent out within ten working dates after the meeting or inspection was held. The initial comments are recommended to be sent to all staff that needs to provide comment by fax or preferably by registered electronic mail. All comments are then to be returned to the Designer within 10 more working days. Failure to provide comment will constitute an approval of the document. If more time is needed because of conflicts, need for decisions, or other factors, the individual shall advise of the need for the additional time and an expected date that a response may be expected. The PDT will decide if the time extension is warranted. The time delay should be documented in the report and in the consultant's monthly report, if applicable. At the end of this period, the designer shall compile all comments received and send out a final inspection report. No further approvals or comments for this report are to be expected at this time unless the report clearly documents the need for further studies, recommendations, or approvals.

It is noted that inspections should cover functional, not drafting issues. The appearance of a set of plans shall be left to the Designer except in matters that may have an impact on the contractor's ultimate bid on the project. It has been determined that all roadway earthwork calculations should be directly shown and be a part of the project cross sections.

FINAL PLANS

The DPDT shall know and understand the dates required to meet all letting schedules including P.S.&E., date of advertisement, and notice to contractors. An annual listing of the involved dates for each letting schedule are provided to the District. If the DPDT is unaware of this schedule or is unsure of items or actions required to meet the schedule, they should address their concerns to their Central Office Location Engineer.

The Central Office will aid the Districts in preparing final plans as requested by the DPDT. The Division of Highway Design Section formerly known as the Roadway Plan Review Section has now been re-titled the Plan Processing Section. Unless directly requested to aid the Designer by the DPDT, the Plan Processing Section will not modify any plans except to add Traffic, Structure, Utility Plans, etc., that may be received in Central Office late in the project design from sources outside of the original Designer.

The role of the Plan Processing Section will be to provide quality assurance in the design of the projects. Copies of plans should be submitted to the Plan Processing Section 120 to 150 days in advance of the letting. This copy is not intended or required to be final plans, but rather should contain the major bid items, quantities, and bid notes. Final adjustments for right-of-way settlements, utility involvement, or other minor changes may occur after the submittal. The Plan Processing Section will verify plan quantities and notes and will submit comments back to the Designer no less than 90 days prior to the letting. A minimum of 30 days will be required by the Plan Processing Section for this activity. As time frames of reviews of other projects and letting schedules allow, the plan verification from the Plan Processing Section may occur as late as 75 days prior to the letting, if requested by the DPDT and if approved by the Plan Processing Section Head.

The Designer, district or consultant, shall be responsible for incorporating the Plan Process Section comments into the plans. The Final Plans submitted are to be the final product of the Designer and will be his responsibility for any identified problems during construction. The DPDT shall submit Final Plans to the Project Processing Section a minimum of 90 days in advance of all lettings requiring PS&E or 60 days in advance for all other projects. The Plan Processing Section will be advised at that time of any additional plans or other information that they will be requested to insert into the plans. The DPDT is responsible for assuring that all information (utility plans, etc.) required to be incorporated into the Final Plans by the Plan Processing Section is received in a timely manner to make the intended schedule for availability to contractors. The Plan Processing Section will perform no other activities with the plans after final submittal other than that directly identified by the DPDT.

This new process is to be phased in accordance with the final schedule:

Districts 1,3,4,6 & 11 - July 1998 letting (plans available in February)

Districts 5,8,10,12 - August, 1998 letting (plans available March)

Districts 2,7,9 - September, 1998 letting (plans available April)

PROJECT SCOPING

All projects shall be scoped at least one year prior to the authorization of project design. The scoping will be utilized to address project issues including purpose and need, termini, deficient conditions to be addressed, refined cost estimates by phase, identification of critical environmental issues or any special issues or concerns, and an expected fiscal year schedule for the major phases. This activity will be required for all projects beginning with FY 2000 design. The form for scoping is attached and is meant to replace Exhibit 03-03 in the Design Manual. When completed, copies of this form is to be submitted to Central Office Design and Programming. The Statewide Preliminary Design Consultant may be utilized for these scoping efforts if requested by the District Preconstruction Engineer.

JBS;jad

Attachments

[**Project Scoping Summary Form - \(TC 61-6\) - Microsoft Excel Format**](#)