

**Partnering Agreement
between the
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
and the
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)**

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) California Division office and the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) strive to deliver consistent environmentally-related policy and program guidance leading to balanced transportation projects that meet the safety and mobility needs of the community while preserving and enhancing the natural and manmade environment.

VISION

The FHWA and Caltrans partner to provide efficient decision-making to attain environmentally-related goals consistent with the Caltrans and FHWA Strategic Plans.

MISSION

Using a quality approach, FHWA and Caltrans are committed to developing policy and program guidance that ensures that Caltrans and FHWA activities add value to the timely delivery of state and local transportation projects and services, respond to customer concerns, and comply with all federal and state laws and regulations.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Council - Represents senior Caltrans and FHWA management and provides guidance and direction to the Steering Committee. Approves recommended emphasis areas on an annual or as needed basis. Meets quarterly, or as needed. Commits the necessary resources to accomplish objectives.

Steering Committee - Consists of Caltrans and FHWA staff, responsible for identifying, prioritizing, and tracking emphasis areas that are based upon joint goals; make recommendations to the Executive Council; receives approval from Executive Council on emphasis areas prior to making staff assignments; provides direction to the Quality Improvement Teams (QIT); and makes team assignments. At least one member of the Steering Committee shall serve on each QIT. At a minimum, the Steering Committee will meet monthly. Quarterly they will meet with the Executive Council and report on current activities.

Quality Improvement Teams (QIT) - Consists of specialized staff representing federal, state, and/or local agencies. Utilizes the quality approach, as defined by Caltrans, to identify problems and opportunities for improvement, recommend solutions, implement joint objectives, and propose performance measures for those specific areas. Reports directly to the Steering Committee.

FHWA AND CALTRANS PARTNERING AGREEMENT

GROUND RULES

Have a common standard (i.e., federal regulation) from which all processes and procedures are derived
Build trust, respect, and professionalism
Use consensus approach
When consensus cannot be achieved use the dispute resolution process, whereby the Executive Council is the final arbiter
Do not let unresolved issues impede progress but attempt to resolve those issues at a later time
Be willing to challenge current practices
Streamline processes by eliminating requirements which add no value or are redundant
Comply with legal requirements
Foster teamwork
Develop and maintain prioritization process
Take pride in our work
Always strive for quality while operating in a schedule-driven environment
Be open to change
Keep on schedule
Empower the Steering Committee to develop and deliver an annual plan of priorities
The Executive Council shall review and concur with the Steering Committee's priorities and may, with cause, modify such priorities

PRIORITIZING OF EMPHASIS AREAS FOR JOINT GOALS

We acknowledge that agency goals and objectives vary from year to year, based on such factors as risk assessments, workload, needs or wishes of our partners, findings from previous years, national and/or regional objectives, and regulatory requirements. We agree to work together through the Executive Council and the Steering Committee to ensure that the direction we give our staffs is clear and well defined. And we agree to dedicate the necessary resources to ensure the timely completion of our joint goals and objectives. Goals will be revisited and updated quarterly.

/s/ Bob Coleman *10/13/98*
Robert Coleman Date
Caltrans Project Development

/s/ Brian J. Smith *10/2/98*
for Allan H. Hendrix Date
Caltrans Planning

/s/ Jeffrey A. Lindley *10/2/98*
Jeffrey A. Lindley Date
Federal Highway Administration

MEMBERSHIP

Executive Council

FHWA Brad Keazer, Assistant Division Administrator
Dennis Scovill, Planning, Finance, Environment, and ROW Team Leader

Caltrans Brian Smith, Environmental Program Manager
Alan Glen, Assistant Program Manager for Design and Local Programs

Steering Committee

FHWA Karen Schmidt, Environmental Program Manager
Brett Jackson, Environmental Engineer

Caltrans Barbara McDonnell, Chief, Environmental Management (Environmental Programs)
Denise O'Connor, Environmental Coordinator (Environmental Programs)
Germaine Belanger, Environmental Coordinator for Local Programs