


 Check out
 the video


Federal-aid Program Overview Local Public Agency Program Stakeholder Partnering

www.fhwa.dot.gov/federal-aidessentials

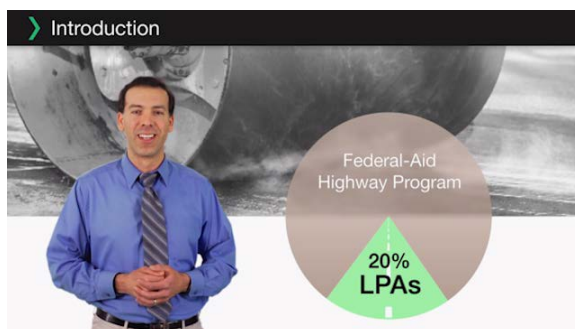
Stakeholder partnering improves efficiencies across the program and helps speed Federal-aid project delivery



Did you know that 75 percent of the Nation's roads are owned and maintained by local public agencies, known as LPAs?



You might be surprised to learn that as much as 20 percent of the Federal-aid Highway Program is sub-allocated for LPA projects, all of which makes LPAs important partners in helping to maintain our critical transportation infrastructure.



But sometimes our LPA partners become confused, overwhelmed, or frustrated with

how to comply with Federal-aid regulations. This is especially true when compliance with a regulation requires agency personnel to depart from a familiar practice. State departments of transportation, or State DOTs, that commit to minimizing these issues tend to have stronger relationships with their LPA partners, more timely completions of Federal-aid projects, and greater compliance with Federal-requirements.



One innovation that State DOTs use to achieve this is stakeholder partnering. Stakeholder partnering brings together transportation professionals committed to meet regularly and work toward common goals. Stakeholder partnering uses collaborative problem solving to identify inefficiencies experienced on Federal-aid projects and to create or change practices, policies, and procedures that will improve efficiencies across the program. Stakeholder partnering committees include

representatives from State, Federal, and local agencies, and other Federal-aid program stakeholders. While stakeholder partnering will not change Federal requirements, it can change how a State implements them.

> What is stakeholder partnering?



- ◆ Collaborative problem solving
- ◆ Identify inefficiencies
- ◆ Change practices

For example, a stakeholder partnering committee that wants to accelerate project delivery might work to speed the process for hiring consultants by sharing with LPAs State-managed contracts for consultant services. Or a stakeholder's partnering committee focused on agency cash flow might provide training on the completion of billable milestones, including contract administration forms. Let's talk about the importance of stakeholder partnering for collaborative problem solving. The State DOTs that have benefited the most from stakeholder partnering have some common characteristics. To begin with, each makes a commitment to the process.

> Characteristics of a successful program



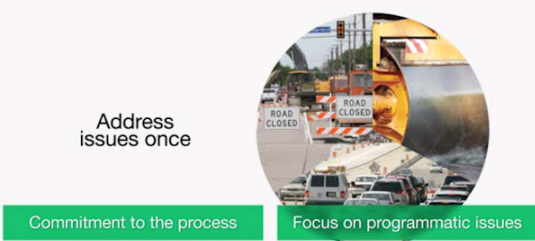
Memorandum

Commitment to the process

A memorandum of understanding that identifies the committee chair and its members may solidify this commitment. For example, in addition to itself and the Federal Highway Administration, the FHWA, one State DOT defined its committee as

including 14 county and city agencies that focus on urban construction. Motivated by its early success, the committee was later expanded to include all the LPAs within the State. Another common characteristic is that the partnering committee agrees to meet regularly and focus on issues that have programmatic importance.

> Characteristics of a successful program



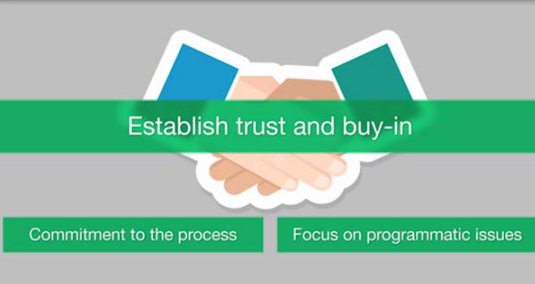
Address issues once

Commitment to the process

Focus on programmatic issues

The goal is to address issues once rather than have to deal with them repeatedly on a project-level basis. Additionally, the committee actively works to establish trust and obtain buy-in for the process.

> Characteristics of a successful program



Establish trust and buy-in

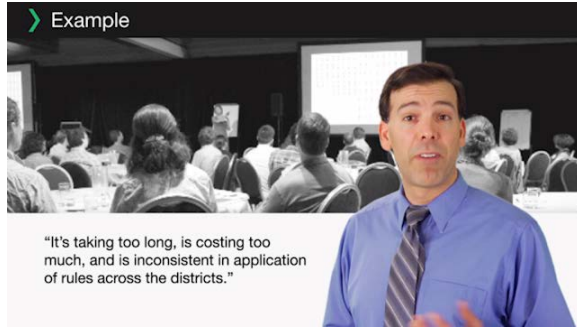
Commitment to the process

Focus on programmatic issues

If stakeholders doubt the sincerity of the committee and its willingness to follow through on commitments, committee members may be reluctant to share concerns and contribute the resources necessary to resolve problems. Good trust-building practices include: setting the agenda in an open and collaborative way. Taking meeting minutes and timely distributing them to members, and following through on commitments.

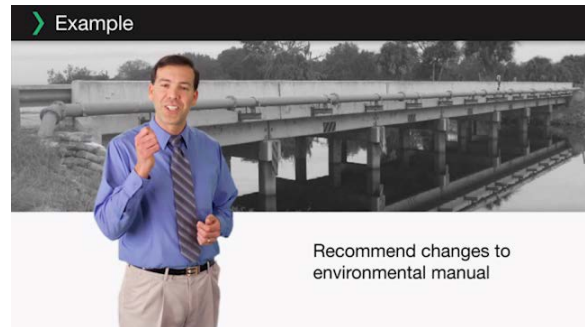
Let's see how one State DOT got started with stakeholder partnering. A State DOT representative attended a meeting of the American Public Works Association, the

APWA, to discuss LPA issues related to Federal-aid projects, such as the duration and costs of Federal-aid projects and the inconsistent application of policy across the DOT districts.



To begin tackling the issues, the State DOT agreed to give stakeholder partnering a try. Executives at the State DOT met to discuss the composition of the committee and the types of issues it would address. They agreed to include an LPA from a large metropolitan area along with a representative from both the APWA and the National Association of County Engineers, known as NACE. At the first meeting, the committee looked at the list of known issues, added a few more that were offered during discussion, and set some priorities. At the top of the list was how simple bridge projects might be accelerated. The committee set up a subgroup of bridge engineers and district managers to work on the problem and report back to the committee.

Through regular briefings, the committee learned that most LPAs had minimal understanding of environmental requirements and were conducting unnecessary environmental reviews. By recommending specific changes to the State's environmental manual, the stakeholder partnering committee found a way to accelerate simple bridge projects.



By working together, government agencies and industry associations can uncover and resolve issues that hinder the LPA program. Stakeholder partnering is easy to implement, yet provides one of the most cost-effective ways for reducing the time and cost of Federal-aid projects. If your LPA program is currently not benefiting from stakeholder partnering, contact your State DOT or FHWA Division Office to learn more about the process.

Additional Resources

- Link to Every Day Counts Locally Administered Federal-aid Projects: Stakeholder Partnering
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/everydaycounts/edc-3/partnering.cfm>

The content of this document is not a substitute for information obtained from State departments of transportation, appropriate FHWA Division Offices, and applicable laws. Scenarios have been simplified for emphasis and do not necessarily reflect the actual range of requirements applicable to the scenario or this topic. This document was created under contract number DTFH63-11-F-00066 by the Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, and is offered to the public to heighten and focus awareness of Federal-aid requirements within the local public agencies community and reinforces the importance of these necessary policies, procedures, and practices.

This Companion Resource is the script content for the video production of the same name.