MEETING MINUTES

GPTQ NEPA Subcommittee Meeting

May 14, 2018
GDOT, 4th Floor, Room 403/404
9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

I. Introductions

II. OES Updates on Working Group Activities

a. EA Template and ICE (Mike Murdoch)
   - Several sections of the EA template have been revised and posted on the SharePoint site.
   - Template is in the traditional format, but reader friendly format is acceptable (the new ICE guidance is reader friendly). Sample language for different types of scenarios is provided.
   - Mike needs feedback from Consultants on approach and content in the template. Also, if you come across new or novel ways of writing things, please let Mike know (longer-term goal is to replace text in the template with real-life examples). Feedback is also vital because the EA Template Working Group would like to get back up and running.

b. PCE Agreement (Jim Pomfret)
   - GDOT is in agreement with FHWA on all contents of the new PCE agreement (including Informal Section 7, de minimis, and entire “c” and “d” list CEs). Minor tweaks in the language are in the works. The goal is to get this signed this summer. After the agreement is signed, OES will be updating the PCE form and consolidate all PCEs into a single form.

c. Abbreviated FONSI (Bobby Dollar)
   - OES is hoping to get approval on this by the end of the fiscal year.

III. Escalation Letters (Amber Phillips)
   - OES has developed a form to send to the GDOT PM when the project is not on schedule. The form tracks the project throughout the schedule. The goal is that these forms will help foster conversations on shifts in schedule.
The letters will state the reason why the schedule is delayed and will help us get the project back on schedule.

The prime will be copied on the letters.

IV. **OES Scheduling Section and P6 Licenses (Kay Abikoye)**

- There is a new team at OES to support on-time delivery of all projects. Team consists of Amber Barlow/Maddox (Districts 5 & 7), Jeff Jackson (Districts 3 & 6), and Kirkland Carden (Districts 1, 2, & 4).
- New P6 licenses are on hold because there are licensing issues with Oracle (GDOT will not be issuing Team Member access until it’s resolved). If consultants need to update and don’t have access, send to Kay Abikoye or to the OES P6 Inbox.
- Kay is setting up training sessions at OES that are hands-on.
- Schedules will be moved to the OES SharePoint site.

V. **Miscellaneous Updates and Information (Mike Murdoch)**

a. **SharePoint Site**

- Concerns have been expressed about the organization of the SharePoint site. Mike would like a working group to be formed to go through the site for suggestions on reorganization, content update, etc. **Please email Mike or Robin to volunteer for this working group.**

b. **Procurement: Revisiting the Cost Spreadsheet**

- OES is revisiting the cost spreadsheet (looking at tasks on spreadsheet for disaggregation, etc.). Goal is to make sure work hours are more equal between GDOT and the consultants for negotiations.
- We are developing a new working group for this. **Please email Mike or Robin with your input on how the spreadsheet should be changed. Also email Mike or Robin to volunteer for this working group.**

c. **OES NEPA Review Training Sessions**

- OES has held several workshops on document review in response to the results of Hiral’s Consultant Survey and the Georgia Tech study (regarding preferential comments and inconsistencies in reviews).
- Mike and Amber Phillips would like consultants to send in preferential comments they receive.

d. **TPRO Comments**

- NEPA managers will be meeting soon to develop a format for NEPA comments because many are getting too long. New format will require resource identification status.
- Long-term initiative to edit Environmental TPRO screen to make it more effective. Bobby Dollar will be leading this effort. **Please send any feedback and suggestions on this to Bobby.**

e. **Other**
Any changes to plans/projects that affect ESAs post-lockdown will need to be approved by Hiral moving forward.
Minor changes to ROW within survey limits can be covered by a programmatic re-evaluation moving forward.

VI. Updates from Other Environmental Disciplines (Laura Dawood)
- All GPTQ environmental subcommittees will be looking at the procurement spreadsheet for updates.
- GDOT is planning to do training on plan reading, which will likely be opened up to all disciplines.
- We will start forwarding all GPTQ environmental subcommittee meeting minutes to the NEPA sub-committee. Also note that the ACEC website has minutes for all of these meetings (plus non-environmental subcommittee meetings).
- History and Noise subcommittees are looking for feedback on the noise lookup table for historic resources on state funded projects.
- Archaeology subcommittee is developing a new Short Form of Negative Findings template. In addition, all site files will be sent to NAHRGIS moving forward.
- Noise subcommittee is working on EPM update. NEPA Summaries: Please send Laura feedback or suggestions on what should be included in these summaries, or any feedback/comments received from FHWA on these).

VII. ICE Training (Laura Dawood/Russ Danser)—Some Highlights and Take-Aways:
- Land Use Research & Meeting with Local Planners: Review local planning documents to get a feel for what local governments consider their priorities. Modify the ICE questions based on the planning documents. Meeting with local planners can be informal. Ask lots of questions (supplement the questionnaire provided by OES). Suggest sending the meeting attendees the questionnaire ahead of time so they can come prepared and know what you will be talking about. May need to have multiple meetings with different players (e.g., regional commission, development authority, zoning commission, local planners, etc.). Bring maps to your meeting. Suggest bringing more than one person to the ICE meeting, particularly someone like the project manager who has knowledge of the project history and status. May need to bring other disciplines (e.g., history, ecology) to ICE meeting.
- Keep phone logs/memos of all conversations.
- Induced Land Use Change Map: in a more developed area, map may also show other past/present/future actions/projects. Area of induced land use change may overlap area of direct land use change.
- Past temporal limit of analysis: Try to find a time when population increased drastically and ask planners during interviews. May have two different inputs—if you use the earliest one, it becomes the worst case and encompasses other limit. Look at when current land uses started occurring (e.g., when major road was constructed, major company/business moved in, when airport was constructed, etc.). Give the logic behind your decision on what time period to use.
- ICE process is very interdisciplinary. There’s an educational component to the process with SMEs (trying to teach them a planning aspect).
- Section 106 has a different definition of ICE
- Induced land use change area has to match the air model and area of travel pattern changes. If they do not match, FHWA will not sign your document. This came up on the I-75 managed lane and I-85 projects.
- Encroachment-alteration effects may be called proximity effects.
- NRCS has great maps/aerials (historic)
- Archaeology: Handle in a qualitative manner. Oftentimes in rural areas there have been no previous surveys within 1 mile of the project area. Look at probabilities will need to rely on predictive modeling to do ICE meaningfully.
- Keep in mind that land use change and zoning changes are different.