

Environmental Program Performance Management



Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA)/ FDOT Central Environmental Management Office (CEMO) Annual ETDM Program Review Meeting Notes

Meeting Date and Location

August 22, 2005
2 PM
at
URS Corporation Southern
1625 Summit Lake Drive
Tallahassee Florida 32317

Meeting Attendees

Buddy Cunill - FDOT
Carl McMurray - FDOT
Mary Harger - FDOT
Cathy Kendall - FHWA
Diane Quigley - DCA
Gary Donaldson - DCA
Terri Alexander - URS
Roosevelt Petithomme - URS

□ Purpose and Overview of the Annual Review Meeting

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the relationship and coordination efforts between the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) before and after the implementation of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process.

DCA has been an active participant in the ETDM Process. The agency provided a draft of the agency's Annual Report in advance of the meeting, which detailed their business relations before and after the implementation of ETDM. They also highlighted concerns the agency experienced during its involvement in the ETDM process.

□ Business Relations and Processes Before ETDM

The Florida Department of Community Affairs is a centralized state agency, with its entire staff located in Tallahassee. The Division of Community Planning (DCP) is part of DCA and is responsible for comprehensive state planning. DCP is comprised of two bureaus: the State Planning Bureau, and the Comprehensive Plan Review Bureau. Transportation projects enter DCA for review in 3 ways, 1. Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Process (ICAR). 2. FDOT Five Year Work Program (WP), 3. and the MPO Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP).

Prior to 2001, DCA had 5 to 6 staff members focused on reviewing FDOT projects by region. These positions were eliminated however, due to budget cuts and a reorganization of the Department in 2001. The staff reductions limited DCA's ability

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to review FDOT projects, as there was minimal staff available. This resulted in DCA only being able to review approximately 30 FDOT projects per year.

Another issue before ETDM was due to a lack of dedicated staff, there were often multiples files created by different staff on FDOT projects, which lead to projects being reviewed multiple times. The lack of a staff assigned exclusively to FDOT projects prevented DCA from expediting FDOT projects. Diane Quigley estimates that a maximum of 5 to 6 hours per month were spent reviewing a FDOT project. Additionally, there was little if any coordination with FDOT during project reviews, and the quality of the reviews varied depending on the planner doing the review. DCA's comments were primarily about potential transportation impacts created by proposed comprehensive plan amendments.

Ms. Quigley identified several barriers to coordination and involvement with FDOT prior to the implementation of ETDM:

- **Staff time**– In relation to Local Government Comprehensive Plan (LGCP) reviews, transportation project reviews were not a high priority. LGCP reviews must meet statutory time frames and little time is available for additional project involvement or reviews. Often the Advance Notification (AN), TIP and WP projects were not reviewed by staff due to time limitations.
- **Staff resources** – The one and only DCA transportation planner participated in several FDOT and other transportation planning programs, and did not have time to participate in the planning process for each individual transportation project.
- **Coordination** – Since DCA reviews transportation projects at various stages of project production, several planners may have reviewed the same project and provided different review comments. This lack of project tracking and coordination led to duplicative reviews of projects, and in some instances conflicting review comments. DCA does not share or publish any joint notices with FDOT.

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□ Business Relations and Processes After ETDM

The implementation of ETDM has not changed the organizational structure within DCA; however DCA notes the following changes:

- The addition of a consultant (1 Full Time Equivalent) that is dedicated to FDOT projects and works under DCA direction. This new full time dedicated position is filled by Gary Donaldson of URS.
- Gary Donaldson receives notification of ETDM projects directly through email and prepares and coordinates all DCA responses internally.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of FDOT projects reviewed by DCA.
- DCA now has the ability to review projects during the planning phase (early involvement). This was not possible prior to ETDM.
- Notable improvements in interagency communication and coordination efforts.
- The Environmental Screening Tool (EST) is a very useful tool in reviewing projects and collecting GIS information and ETAT comments.
- Gary Donaldson's presence has streamlined the review process for DCA
- Gary Donaldson coordinates all internal reviews and tracks all projects for commenting purposes, this has added efficiency and reduced the work effort while increasing the number of projects reviewed by DCA.
- Increased coordination with FDOT, the process has enhanced communication between the two agencies.
- Elimination of multiple reviews due to tracking and a single point of contact - Gary Donaldson.
- Diane Quigley approves all comments and responses before issuance by Gary Donaldson.

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□ Discussion of Performance Measures in EST

Roosevelt Petithomme led the discussion on performance measures. Roosevelt presented the performance measures information included in the DCA review packet. The packet provides a sample of the forms that will be used to evaluate Environmental Transportation Advisory Team (ETAT) agencies during Phase II of the Performance Management System. The following forms were presented for sample purposes:

- **ETAT Agency Surveys** are qualitative assessments of an ETAT agency's comments. This survey considers the value added by the ETAT comments and the comprehensiveness of the comments. Additional considerations are an ETAT agencies level of responsiveness and recommendations to address identified impacts, such as technical reports or mitigation and or elimination strategies.
 - **ETAT Agency Participation Review Tables** are designed to provide a comparative assessment of the ETAT agencies based upon their participation from the time the agencies received their Notice to Proceed (NTP). The table provides a Highlight Table Section that is designed to highlight extraordinary accomplishments and pin point any areas of concern, such as an excessive number of non-jurisdictional comments
 - **Quarterly Project Reports** are an important component to measure agency involvement and effectiveness within the ETDM process. The project reports include accomplishments made during the period in different categories such as administration, coordination, and project reviews.
 - **Program Review Form** consists of a list of projects reviewed during the Planning and Programming Screens and are entered into the Program Review form that provides an excellent project summary tool for the agencies and FDOT.
- Ms. Quigley stated that she would give DCA a "B" grade based upon their current efforts in the ETDM program. Mr. Donaldson stated that internal improvements were needed along with education so that the DCA staff members could gain a better understanding of the scope and utility of ETDM. Overall, DCA felt that the "system and process" works very well. DCA is proposing in-house ETDM training for DCA staff to be provided with assistance from FDOT. Although the training would prove beneficial in providing DCA staff with a better understanding of the ETDM process and EST tool, DCA staff resources are still limited and additional staff will still be necessary to assist planners with the

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ETDM reviews.

□ Contract Management Discussion

There were no outstanding issues identified relative to the second generation funding agreement for DCA. Mr. Cunill stated that Diane Quigley would receive an email notifying her that the new funding agreement was available for review on the new online system. The web address for the agreement website is: <http://etdmprocess.urs-tally.com/>

□ Recommendations

- Ms. Quigley and Mr. Donaldson expressed that DCA staff is not fully aware of how ETDM is related to their tasks and functions. Mr. Donaldson and Ms. Quigley expressed a need for a DCA training session in 2006.
- Ms. Quigley stated that the degrees of effect used to rank projects needs to be clarified. Each ETAT agency has its own perception of the degrees of effect. CEMO will discuss this with the ETDM Coordinators and address it in ETDM training.

□ Benefits of ETDM

- Streamlining (ETDM) has maximized the level of DCA involvement in transportation projects
- The EST and Gary Donaldson have brought about a greater level of efficiency for DCA reviews and responses.
- Elimination of multiple and conflicting reviews and files
- Increase communication and coordination with FDOT and other ETAT agencies

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□ Conclusion

DCA has been an active participant in the ETDM process and is very happy with the ETDM program. Since DCA's involvement in the program there has been an increase in the efficiency of its transportation project reviews, along with an increase in coordination with FDOT and the other ETAT agencies. Ms. Quigley stated that despite a reduction in staff, the designation of one full time position to the process has resulted in DCA reviewing five times as many projects as they were prior to the implementation of ETDM.

Transportation projects have not traditionally been a high priority with DCA, unless they were apart of the LGCP. With the implementation of ETDM, DCA is able to assign 100 percent of their consultant's time to reviewing FDOT projects. DCA wants to continue in the program with a new 3 year funding agreement. In 2006 DCA want to improve its success within the program by educating DCA staff on the importance of ETDM and how it relates to the other programs that DCA participates in.