MINUTES OF MEETING (FINAL)

PROJECT: PENNDOT Agreement E00229
Open-end Agreement for ITS, Traffic and Highway Safety Engineering Services
Work Order 018- District 2-0 Regional Operations Plan (ROP)

PURPOSE OF MEETING: District 2-0 Regional Operations Plan Workshop #1

LOCATION: Ramada Inn & Conference Center
State College, PA

DATE OF MEETING: April 20th, 2007

ATTENDEES: PennDOT Engineering District 2-0 (D-2)
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Potter County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)
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The purpose of the Regional Operations Plan (ROP) Workshop Meeting is to discuss the needs areas for the region with the transportation and planning partners. The transportation and planning partners of the District 2-0 Region provided feedback and input on the technical direction of Operations in the Region. The workshop helped identify the current status of the region and the transportation operation needs areas and priorities.
Background

The meeting began with opening remarks and introductions from Kevin Kline, District 2-0 Executive. A presentation on the overview of District 2-0’s ITS Program was given by Denny Prestash. Denny highlighted the importance of the Regional Operations Plan (ROP) for the District 2-0 Region and the role the attendees at today’s workshop meeting have on the development of the ROP.

Denny referenced the ITS Strategic Plan that was completed in 2004 as an important example of an ITS/Operations plan. He said that the Traffic Management Center (TMC) that is under construction now was a planned project that came out of the ITS Strategic Plan. He told the attendees that as part of the ROP in District 2-0 a Signal Strategic Plan and an update to the District’s ITS Architecture would be completed. He said that many of the attendees at the ROP meeting were also involved with the ITS Architecture and ITS Strategic Plan.

As part of the presentation, Denny shared an example simulation of a DMS and a Speed Monitoring System deployed in the District that operates together to decrease the number of accidents on SR 322. The DMS posts a “Slow Down Now” message to motorists driving on SR 322 and violating the posted speed limit. The DMS message has reduced the number of accidents caused by speeding around the curve on SR 322. The example of an existing ITS Device working in District 2-0 was a good indication that ITS works and is important for the District to deploy as part of the ROP process. The following list is the existing/planned ITS Devices in District 2-0 that Denny also highlighted:

- TMC under-construction in the District Office (Clearfield)
- Deployment of additional anti-icing bridge sprayers
- I-99 Fiber Optic Backbone- allows for real-time information to the TMC
- 30 CCTV planned for deployment
- Approximately 83 portable DMS in the District deployed on an as-needed basis

ROP Presentation

Keith Mullins (EK) gave a presentation explaining the purpose of the ROP. He spoke about the Regional ITS Architecture being the first step in defining the needs of the district and operations that address the needs. Many of the attendees at the workshop were a part of the Regional ITS Architecture development. A Regional Guidance Document was developed by PennDOT to be used in the ROP process to ensure consistency for all Districts. The document outlines a step-by-step process to be followed for the development of the ROP.

Keith also mentioned the ITS Strategic Plan that sets District 2-0 ahead of other Districts participating in the ROP because it already examined the needs and priorities of the region. The District 2-0 ROP will revisit these needs and priorities and look at other priorities for the District according to the needs developed by the participants of the ROP process. The needs tables from the ITS Strategic Plan were handed out to all meeting attendees to be used as tool for discussion on Needs Areas.

The other document that provides a foundation for the ROP is the Transportation Systems Operations Plan (TSOP). The TSOP outlines the operation goals for PennDOT statewide. The goals are general for the entire state and each district is to adapt them to their own operational needs. The TSOP lists 19 key projects linked to component needs areas that serve as baseline needs for the ROP Needs Areas.
Currently a TSOP project for PennDOT Staffing/Organization is being investigated because this need has been raised in most of the Districts as part of the ROP. The ROP and TSOP will be updated every 2 years. The projects that are planned under the ROP will be listed as short-term (1 – 2 years) and long-term (3 – 4 years).

Keith discussed Operations and how the focus on ITS devices and Operations is to improve the performance of the transportation system. The goal of the ROP is to program projects on the TIP or identify other funding sources. The ROP is a programming effort, not a deployment effort. The ROP is to be completed by July 31st, 2007 in order for projects to be considered for the 2009 TIP update process. As part of this effort a Traffic Signal Strategic Plan and ITS Architecture update are also being completed. Traffic Signals were a high priority need in the ITS Strategic Plan. The traffic signals in the District will be reviewed with each municipality and on the existing traffic signal database will be analyzed.

Amy Kessler, North Central RPO, noted that the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) can help coordination with the municipalities. She questioned the potential of PennDOT taking ownership of signals. Keith said that recommendations should be consistent with the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Study in order to help the municipalities be proactive with their traffic signals. The group does not anticipate PennDOT to take ownership of all the signals.

It is essential to the development of the ROP to have small group discussions and share ideas on the needs and goals of all agencies in the region. The Task Force groups will be small working groups that will concentrate on a specific need area. The intent of the Workshop and future Task Force Meetings is to express a need, identify an operation system that would address the need, and potentially plan a project that addresses the need. The Needs Areas are broader topics that will represent the individual task force groups which stakeholders can be a part of to address the needs identifications according to their individual Operations as well as in relation to the Operations of the region.

Needs Areas/Needs Identifications

Keith opened the discussion of Needs Areas to the entire group. The Need Tables from the ITS Strategic Plan were distributed to all attendees was a good starting point for discussion. He went through each need listed in the table to get an idea of what additional needs should be included in the ROP. The needs on the table that were of importance to the District included:

- Traffic Signals
- Transit & Public Transportation Management
- Incident & Emergency Management
- Traffic Control
- Freight & Commercial Vehicle Operations
- Integration

A summary of the Needs Areas discussion is listed below. The needs were transcribed on easel pads by Keith; however the needs have not been ranked or prioritized.
Traffic Signals

The Traffic Signal Needs Areas addressed the concerns for traffic signals in the region. The Needs discussion included:

- Coordination for Detour Routing when there is an incident on the adjacent interstate
- Funding for Signal Re-timing
- Utility Partnerships
- Capital Program Funding

The above needs will be identified under the ROP, as well as the Traffic Signal Strategic Plan. This task force group will be working in conjunction with efforts on the strategic plan.

Transit and Public Transportation Management

The Transit and Public Transportation Management addressed the need for improvements to the Transit operations in the District. The Needs discussion included:

- Funding constraints
- En-route transit information
- Traveler Information to Transit Providers
- Improve travel times for transit journeys
- Traveler Information- 511 System

The Road Closure Reporting System (RCRS) is being completed as a statewide effort to improve information on road closures statewide and regionally. District 2-0 will coordinate with the statewide efforts.

Incident and Emergency Management

The Incident Management discussion addressed the need to take care of incidents better and utilize ITS/Operations for alerting motorists to an incident. The Needs discussion included:

- Message Consistency
- Device placement- look at ITS Gap Plans
- Road Closure Reporting System (RCRS)
- Improve the use of Incident Command System (ICS)
- NIMS Implementation
- User friendly PennDOT Website
- After action Review as follow up to steps taken to clear an incident
- Dedicated funding for Incident Response Training
- Educating Officials
- Include Security and Safety
- Centrally located TMC
- Weigh-in-Motion
The discussion on Incident and Emergency Management stemmed from the needs of the emergency responders and Pennsylvania State Police (PSP). The need for an improved Incident Command System (ICS) was an important topic. The current procedure for responding to an incident is to get the job done, but by an individual approach. Responders tend to follow their own procedures and not work as a team. A hierarchy for incident response is needed to clear incidents more effectively. Mike Harris, PB, suggested that dedicated funding for regular incident response training could be programmed in the ROP.

Clifford Lutz, PSU Police Department, shared the University’s team building exercise that they will do this summer. He invited the PennDOT leaders to participate. The activity will help with incident response and working together when responding to emergencies. The exercise includes a foreman who is in charge of coordinating efforts and at the end of the activity the Forman must go over the “lessons learned” to learn what worked best. Currently evacuation plans are being developed for PSU are being put together for the University.

**Traveler Information**

The Traveler Information Needs Areas addressed the Needs Areas concerning the dissemination of traveler information to the public. The Needs discussion included:

- HAR message should include Exit name and number
- 5-1-1 System
- Video from CCTV will be available on Trafficland.com
- Approximately 30 CCTV being deployed
- Use DMS to post Emergency Messages
- Welcome Centers to post traveler information
- Goods Movement

Mike Harris, PB commented about the technology of the 5-1-1 system that will be available in the future. The 5-1-1 system is a phone and Internet based system that provides motorists with one number to call to find out traveler information. The 5-1-1 system is a statewide effort and District 2-0 is encouraged to coordinate their efforts with the statewide plan. Tom Zilla, Centre County MPO, pointed out that to identify traveler information needs, it is important to address the customer needs and what they are looking for when traveling through the District. This will be addressed further in the Task Force Meetings.

**Traffic Control**

The Traffic Control Needs Areas were decided to be included as part of the Maintenance and Construction Task Force. The Maintenance and Construction Needs Areas have been identified by the questionnaires that each County Maintenance Manager completed. It was decided that the meetings for this Task Force will coincide with the County Maintenance Monthly Staff Meetings. The Needs Identifications include:

- Reduce congestion due to accidents
- First Incident Commander on the scene needs to do a better job of detour routing
- Timely Incident Clearance / Debris Removal
• Tractor trailer accident cleanup procedures
• Ramp Meters / Gates
• Secondary Crashes
• Ability to clear roadway utilizing construction equipment if it will clear the roadway efficiently
• Rapid Clearance Law – Public Information Campaign

The Rapid Clearance Law will be investigated for its application in Pennsylvania. This information will be shared at the Task Force Meeting.

**Institutional Coordination**

The Institutional Needs Areas discussed were concerning communications and funding issues in the District 2-0 Region. The Needs Identifications include:

• Help manage ITS better on Roadways with 24/7 coverage – staffing issues
• A Regional TMC so that operations are controlled by personnel familiar with the area.
• Improve Interagency communications
• Fostering relationships among planning partners

Keith went through the final Needs Areas listed on the table for Emissions Monitoring and Mitigation, Electronic Payment System and Highway Rail Intersection and it was decided these were not going to be discussed as Needs Areas unless they came up in a Task Force Meeting.

The general Needs Areas that came out of the large group discussion were categorized under five (5) main topics. The five (5) main topics will serve as the Task Force Groups and the general needs will be identified with at least one Task Force Group.

The Task Force Groups that were formed based on the Needs Areas that came out of the discussion were:

1. Traveler Information
2. Incident and Emergency Management
3. Traffic Signals
4. Institutional Coordination
5. Maintenance and Construction (will be conducted in coordination with County Maintenance Managers)

These five (5) groups will be the Task Force Groups, which will have future meetings and help plan projects to improve ITS/Operations in the District 2-0 Region.

**Questions / Comments**

If additional information is needed or documents wanted about the ROP, the ROP website is [www.paits.org/rop](http://www.paits.org/rop). The website includes updated information on meetings, ROP background and the process.
Next Steps / Action Items

The Taskforce Meeting has been set for June 5th at the Clearfield County 911 Center.

- Task Force Meeting #1 invitation will be sent out to stakeholders.
- Investigate the Rapid Clearance Law for Pennsylvania.

We believe the foregoing minutes to be an accurate summary of the meeting and related decisions. Failing written notification to the contrary, after ten (10) days, we will consider these minutes a statement of facts.

Minutes prepared by:

Keith R. Mullins, P.E.
Edwards and Kelcey

cc: All Meeting Attendees
    EK Project File 040015.038
    EK Project Team