

## **Michigan Local Public Agency (LPA) Stakeholder Partnering (SP)**

### **2018 Accomplishments Report**

**July 24, 2019**

Stakeholder Partnering Team met six times in 2018 and focused on improving partner communications and relationships including working towards resolution of various challenges identified on the Stakeholder Partnering issues matrix. This report summarizes the major issues worked on by the team during 2018.

Meetings occurred on 1/11/18, 3/26/18, 5/17/18, 7/25/18, 9/19/18, and 11/7/18.

There were no changes in the sponsors or team leads.

Sponsors: Denise Donohue from County Road Association (CRA) of Michigan, John LaMacchia from Michigan Municipal League (MML), Brad Wieferich from Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), Theodore Burch from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Team Leads: Steve Puuri from CRA/MML, Tracie Leix and Kelly Crannell from MDOT, and Kurt Zachary from FHWA

#### **MDOT Region Engineer Liaison**

Integration of the Region Engineer Liaison into the LPA Stakeholder Partnering Team was a focus of MDOT for 2018. MDOT Team Leads met quarterly to update the Region Engineer Liaison regarding LPA SP Team actions, progress made on items in the issues matrix, and other Local Agency Program challenges.

In 2018, the LPA Stakeholder Partnering Team focused on 13 issues. Issues stemmed from the four categories identified by the team in 2017: Organizational Change, Culture/Paradigm Shift Education/Risk Management, and Legislative Issues. The work of sub-teams or groups is highlighted, as well, when an issue was previously identified by the LPA SP team.

#### **Consistency & Alignment Improvements**

Following development and administration of the MDOT Construction Oversight and Alignment survey in the fall of 2017, MDOT analyzed survey data and developed a Local Agency Program Strategic Vision and associated goals focused on improving consistency and alignment of MDOT's LAP Construction Oversight activities. Consolidated survey results can be found on the MDOT Local Agency Construction website: [www.Michigan.gov/MDOTLocalConstruction](http://www.Michigan.gov/MDOTLocalConstruction). The strategic vision, survey results, and general consistency and alignment goals were shared at several external conferences and meetings including County Engineer's Workshop, CRA Engineering Committee meetings, various LAP training webinars, MDOT/ACEC Partnering Workshop, and various internal MDOT workshops and conferences. *2019 actions include finalizing the Strategic Vision document and sharing with the LPA SP Team. A future action includes developing a supplemental survey focused on the Development functions of the Local Agency Program and expanding Strategic Vision goals to include those aspects as well.*

*LAP Strategic Vision: MDOT will assist local agencies with preserving state and federal aid in a fair and consistent manner and serve as an information resource.*

## **AASHTOware Conversion**

A subcommittee, chaired by Sheryl Siddall, was created to focus on local agency solutions to MDOT replacement of FieldManager. AASHTOware, the tool identified by MDOT to replace FieldManager, was not developed to accommodate non-federal aid work, which FieldManager has allowed. The subcommittee sat in several meetings with MDOT leadership to determine potential approaches moving forward. A survey for all local agencies was developed and sent out in the fall of 2018 and local agencies strongly prefer a single source solution for both their federal-aid and non-federal aid projects. MDOT leadership is exploring options with Infotech, the developer of AASHTOware. *2019 actions include identifying the most preferred solution for local agency projects moving forward.*

## **Project Bundling**

Project bundling is a big focus for the LPA SP team. A pilot pavement marking contract bundle between MDOT Superior Region, MDOT Traffic and Safety, and five local agencies was developed with results and lessons learned expected in 2019. Issues identified up front include streamlining based on local agency fund source, estimating, consistency in pay items, inspection and acceptance challenges, among others. *2019 actions include post-construction follow up and information sharing with the LPA SP Team, MDOT leadership, and local agencies.*

Additionally, a bridge bundling concept is being explored to improve the overall condition of the local agency bridge inventory by MDOT's Bureau of Bridges and Structures (BOBS). BOBS has created a bridge bundling team and has kept the LPA SP Team briefed on the effort. The bridge bundling team has been focused on identifying challenges to a bridge bundling program and development of a bridge bundling framework including identification of potential funding sources. During 2018 BOBS procured the services of a consultant to explore the feasibility of a bridge bundling program. The bridge bundling team is comprised of representatives from MDOT, FHWA, CRA, and MML. MDOT BOBS is the lead for this effort. *2019 actions include updates from the bridge bundling team to the LPA SP Team.*

## **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process Improvement**

Progress made by the NEPA Team in 2018 included establishment and filling a new LAP NEPA Coordinator position within the MDOT Environmental Services Section. This position was filled by Eric Costa. Notification to local agencies and their consultants of the pending changes to the NEPA process for local projects occurred at various meetings, conferences, and webinars statewide. Topic specific webinar training sessions were held throughout the year. A draft NEPA application was developed to replace the NEPA portion of the Program Application for Local Agency Projects and a timeline for full implementation of the new process was finalized. *2019 activities include piloting the new process, refinement and finalization of the new NEPA application and full implementation and monitoring of the new process, to start October 1, 2019, for all new GI packages submitted to MDOT LAP.*

## **Partner Communication & Training**

MDOT and MML kicked off a new webinar series for MML members. The first webinar occurred in January 2018 with the goal of hosting 2-3 webinars annually. The format is information sharing regarding program changes similar to CRA Engineering Committee updates. *2019 actions include continuation of the webinar series.*

Additionally, MDOT worked with LTAP throughout 2018 to deliver several additional training opportunities for local agencies, via live webinar. The webinars were recorded and are available on demand through the LAP development and construction websites. [www.Michigan.gov/MDOTLAP](http://www.Michigan.gov/MDOTLAP) and [www.Michigan.gov/MDOTLocalConstruction](http://www.Michigan.gov/MDOTLocalConstruction). *2019 actions include continuation of the webinars, including additional offerings.*

In 2018, all Regions successfully held Local Agency Workshops in order to promote interaction, communication, and information sharing between MDOT and Local Agencies. *2019 actions include continuation of Regional Local Agency Workshops, focusing on local agency staff and consultants working on day to day project administration, such as project engineers, office technicians, and inspectors.*

### **Template Projects**

Development of a Template Project continues to be an area of focus for the LPA SP Team. A subcommittee was created to work on development of the template. The subcommittee, chaired by Bruce Kadzban, learned that many local agencies already have templates developed for specific project types. *2019 actions include utilizing the various templates available and streamlining for statewide use.*

MDOT posted the final research products developed by Wayne State University for their research on standard bridge plans.

### **Dispute Resolution Process**

MDOT has been tasked with revising the Dispute Resolution process for consultant contracts to minimize federal participation in construction due to errors/omissions in the design phase. This effort impacts the Local Agency Program in a couple ways – when local agencies utilize federal funds for design and the Third Party Agreement process – and in construction when non-value added work occurs due to design errors/omissions. *2019 and future actions include development of guidance for impacts of non-value added work.*

### **e-Process Implementation**

Several changes to the Local Agency Program were implemented regarding e-processes. E-Construction became mandatory for local agency projects in October 2018, which includes the utilization of an encrypted e-signature tool such as Adobe or CoSign. Use of LCP Tracker became optional (previously prohibited) for local agency projects in October 2018. Use of Projectwise for submittal of design documents became optional for local agency projects. *2019 actions include mandatory use of both LCP Tracker and DocuSign (formerly CoSign) for electronic signatures in construction and piloting electronic agreements.*

### **Local Agency Warranty Program**

The Local Agency Warranty Task Force finalized the Local Agency Warranty Program and received MDOT and FHWA approval of the program. FHWA State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC) funding was awarded to the Task Force to develop and deliver training to local agencies on the warranty program through the Michigan Local Technical Assistance Program. *2019 actions include development and delivery of training, adoption of the warranty program by local agencies statewide, and implementation of warranties.*

### **Certified Design Engineer**

The concept of a certified design engineer was discussed at a high level to determine what the goals of a certification program would be. *It was determined that this would be a long-term process improvement and any action is deferred to a future date.*

### **Project Close-out Process Improvement**

MDOT performed a project close-out process improvement session in spring 2018, focusing on all MDOT projects, however many challenges are specifically related to the close-out timeliness and file review deficiency resolution of local agency projects. Outcomes from the process improvement continue to be discussed within MDOT with pending process changes to be rolled out to locals in 2019. *2019 actions include gaining insight from local agencies on close-out challenges and finalization of the process improvement including updated guidance in the MDOT Construction Manual.*

### **Force Account Guidance**

Guidance for direct force accounts was updated and published in January 2018 and updated again June 2018 to include a provision for a certified engineer to omit the final file review process, such as with regular let projects. *No 2019 action is anticipated for this item.*

### **Conflict of Interest Guidance**

MDOT initiated a review of Conflict of Interest procedures when local agencies are utilizing federal aid funds to pay for preliminary engineering, construction engineering, or testing services. *2019 actions include developing draft updated guidance with the goal of finalizing the guidance by the end of the calendar year.*

### **Anticipated 2019 Action**

Next steps for 2019 include revisiting the issues matrix to determine next steps as those initially identified are completed as well as continued focus on bridge bundling, certified design engineer, template projects, continued invoicing/payment issues and other topics.