DRAFT DOCUMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE PRIOR TO COMMISSION PRESENTATION

Texas Department of Transportation

Department Implementation of Sunset Advisory Commission Recommendations

June 2010

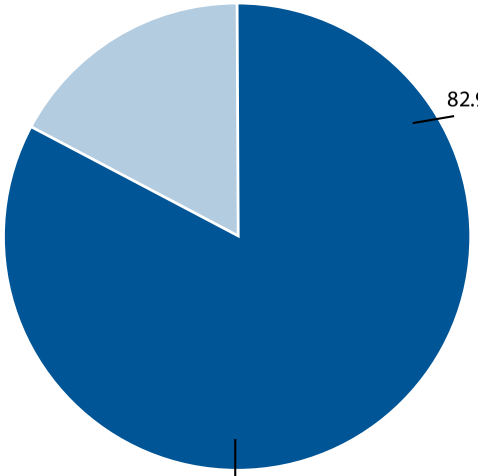
For more information please contact
Jefferson Grimes in the Government and Public Affairs Division at 512-463-6086.

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

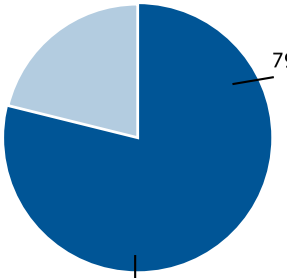
Sunset Average Completion

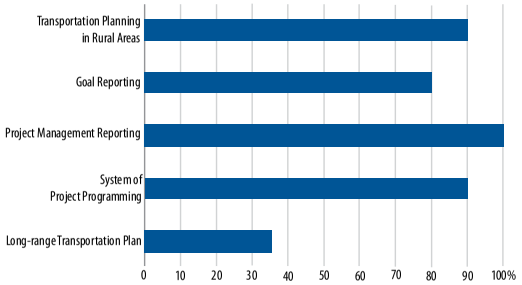
June 2010

Total Average Completion



Issue 2 Completion





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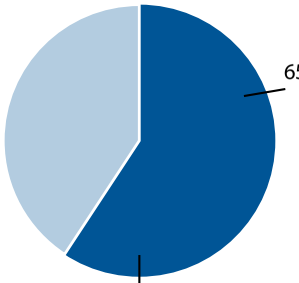
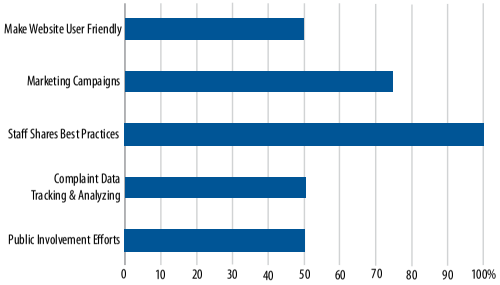
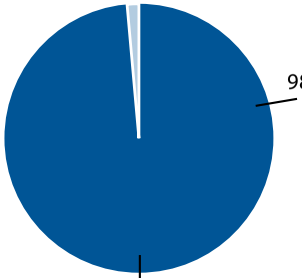
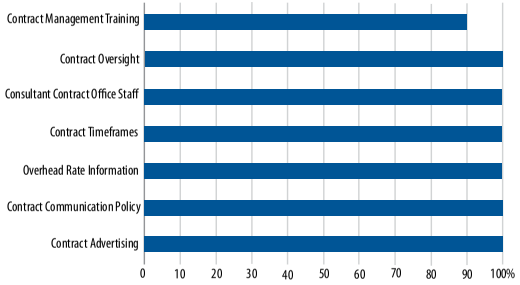




Issue 4 Completion



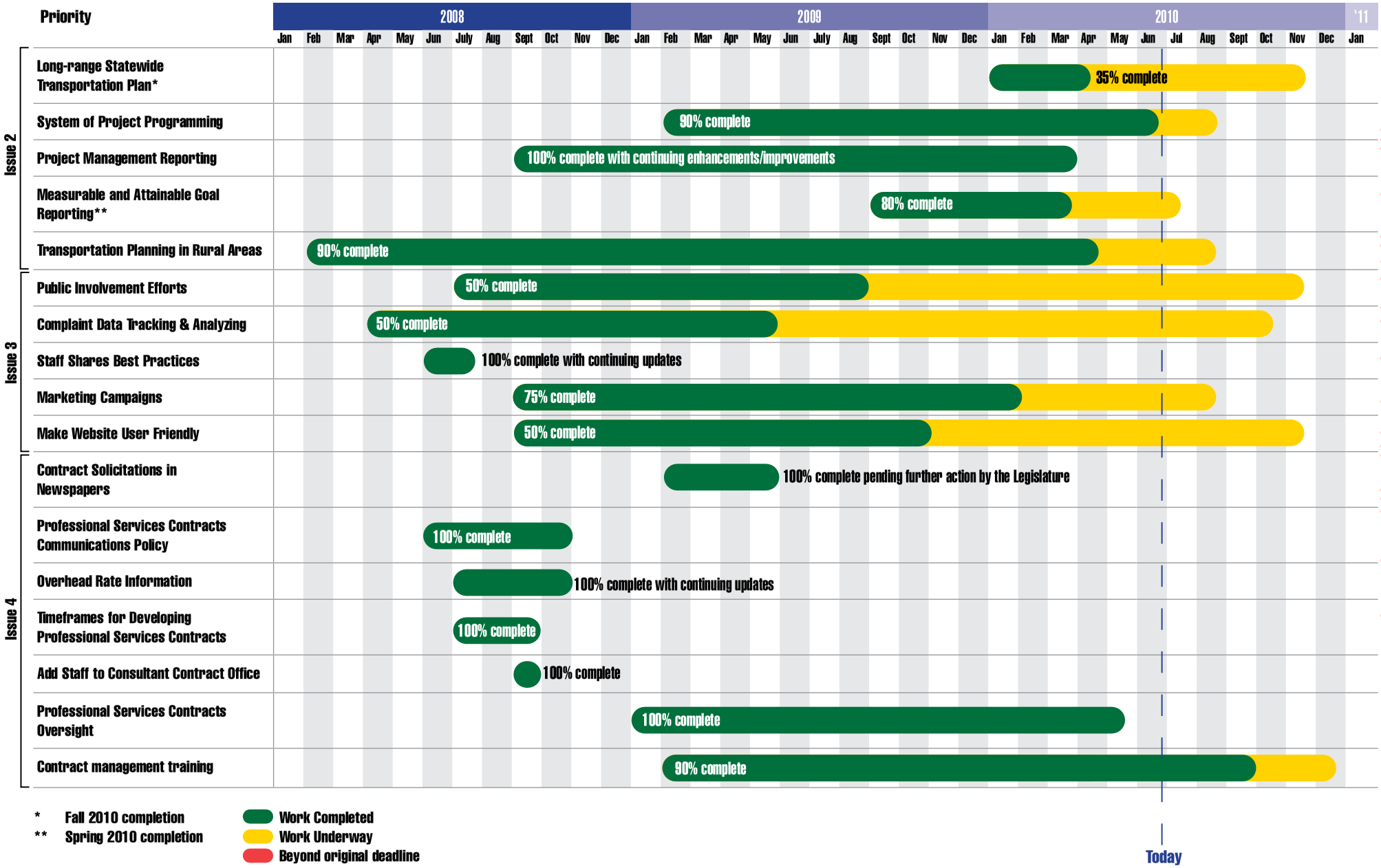


DRAFT DOCUMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE PRIOR TO COMMISSION PRESENTATION

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Sunset Progress

June 2010



* Fall 2010 completion
** Spring 2010 completion

Work Completed
Work Underway
Beyond original deadline

DRAFT DOCUMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE PRIOR TO COMMISSION PRESENTATION

The Sunset Advisory Commission staff issued its recommendations for the Texas Department of Transportation in the summer of 2008. Public comments were received on these recommendations and public hearings were held resulting in final recommendations to the 81st Legislature. Sunset legislation continuing the Texas Department of Transportation did not pass during the 81st Legislative Session; however, many of the recommendations of the Sunset Advisory Commission did not require legislation and TxDOT has been working to implement the recommendations that did not require statutory changes. This is an account of those recommendations, the department's timeline for implementation, and descriptions of the department's efforts in implementing those Sunset recommendations.

Issue 2
Transportation Planning and Project Development Process

These two issues are linked and implementation of both will overlap initially before they fall into their proper sequence. The TxDOT strategic plan (Sunset Advisory Commission issue 2.4), set to be adopted by the Texas Transportation Commission in June 2010, is ultimately in service of the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (SLRTP) which is still in the fieldwork stage (Sunset Advisory Commission issue 2.1). If necessary, the TxDOT Strategic Plan will be adjusted accordingly once the SLRTP is in place before the end of 2010.

Require TxDOT to redevelop and regularly update the long-range Statewide Transportation Plan describing total system needs, establishing overarching statewide transportation goals and measuring progress toward those goals; and

Start Date:
January 2010
End Date:
November 2010
Percentage completed to date:
35%
Responsible Party:
Mary Meyland (SPPM) and Jim Randall (TPP)

Summary: In May 2010, TxDOT held a series of open-house style meetings across the state to receive citizen input on the 24-year statewide plan. Upon compiling comments from the first public meetings, a second set of public meetings will be scheduled for August 2010. A draft report will be prepared for public review in October 2010, with final Texas Transportation Commission consideration in November 2010.

Require TxDOT, with input from transportation partners and policymakers, to develop a system to measure and report on progress in meeting transportation goals and milestones.

Start Date:
September 2009
End Date:
July 2010
Percentage completed to date:
80%
Responsible Party:
Mary Meyland (SPPM) and Jim Randall (TPP)

Summary: TxDOT is updating its 2011-2015 Strategic Plan. Public comments on the draft plan are being incorporated into the document and will be presented to the Texas Transportation Commission for final approval in June 2010. In July 2010, the plan will be submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Office.

Status details on both initiatives: TxDOT is implementing both of these recommendations by using a comprehensive approach that relies on public input, as well as new, statewide transportation goals and performance measures. This approach includes changes and updates to the department's Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan (SLRTP), the Strategic Plan (SP) and the Unified Transportation Program (UTP). The department has also convened external stakeholders in a rulemaking advisory committee to recommend changes to the department's transportation planning and programming rules (currently receiving public comment through July 12, 2010). Each of these processes is integral to developing a transportation plan that reflects the needs of Texas and provides reasonable strategies and goals for TxDOT to meet those needs. These processes and plans are described in detail below.

The **2011-2015 TxDOT Strategic Plan** guides department policies and processes. The plan lists specific goals, objectives, action steps, performance measures and targets for TxDOT. As a map for TxDOT planning efforts, the Strategic Plan guides the agency's responsibilities in the Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan and the UTP by aligning agency initiatives and projects with strategic goals.

In September 2009, the Texas Transportation Commission drafted the new strategic plan, and solicited statewide public comment through focus groups, public polling and employee surveys. It is anticipated that the Texas Transportation Commission will adopt the Strategic Plan in June 2010.

As part of the strategic planning process, and in a move toward greater accountability and transparency, TxDOT launched TxDOT Tracker on the department's website, www.txdot.gov. TxDOT Tracker is an interactive database that shows how the department is performing on 27 key measures and indicators, including on-time and on-budget performance of construction contracts.

While the Strategic Plan is a guide to measure TxDOT operational progress, the 2035 Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan is the state's 24-year planning blueprint. It is collaboration between TxDOT, local and regional decision-makers and transportation stakeholders, and it addresses the state's multimodal statewide transportation needs.

To begin drafting the **2035 Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan**, TxDOT held a series of public forums to solicit input from Texans on the state's transportation needs and future multimodal transportation system. During the summer of 2010, TxDOT will analyze these comments and develop a draft plan. In addition to public input, the plan will identify and quantify the state's systemwide transportation needs. It will include an inventory of – and public comment about – the state's current transportation modes and systems, and analyze needed improvements for those modes. The goal is to determine future needs, by mode, and project future funding to meet those needs.

A second round of public meetings on the long range plan is scheduled for August 2010, and a draft report will be presented to the public in October 2010. Texas Transportation Commission action is expected by the end of the year.

The **Unified Transportation Program** (UTP) guides project development. It lists projects to be developed within the first 10 years of the 24-year long range plan, and is based on existing and forecasted transportation revenue. The UTP distributes funding for 12 project categories including maintenance and construction. For each year of the UTP, projects are listed within their appropriate category with their estimated maintenance and construction costs. The Texas Transportation Commission approved the UTP on April 29, 2010.

The **Transportation Planning and Project Development Rulemaking Advisory Committee** was created by the Texas Transportation Commission in July 2009. Its members are representatives from metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), local governments, transit organizations, tolling authorities and the Federal Highway Administration. The committee has been studying revisions to department transportation planning and programming rules in Title 43 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 15.

The Rulemaking Advisory Committee presented draft rules to the Texas Transportation Commission in May 2010, and after public comments are received, final adoption is expected in August 2010. The work of this committee is essential to the 2035 Statewide Long Range Transportation Plan, the new goals for the 2011-2015 TxDOT Strategic Plan and will be considered in future UTPs.

Establish a transparent, well-defined and understandable system of project programming within TxDOT that integrates project milestones, forecasts and priorities.

Start Date:
February 2009
End Date:
August 2010
Percentage completed to date:
90%
Responsible Party:
John Barton (AEDEO) and Brian Ragland (FIN)

Summary: The Unified Transportation Program (UTP) Working Group issued its final report to TxDOT Administration in October 2009. On a parallel track, new proposed programming

and project development rules drafted by the Transportation Planning and Project Development Rulemaking Advisory Committee were considered by the Texas Transportation Commission in May 2010. Final adoption of the rules is expected in August 2010.

Status details: TxDOT is implementing this recommendation on parallel tracks. Two groups – the UTP Working Group and the Transportation Planning and Project Development Rulemaking Advisory Committee – were convened to develop recommendations on the project programming process.

The UTP Working Group, composed of TxDOT and Federal Highway Administration staff and external stakeholders such as members of metropolitan planning organizations and councils of government, was tasked with establishing a new project planning and development tool in response to Sunset Advisory Commission recommendations.

The first Working Group meeting was conducted in February 2009, and the group appointed various subgroups to study specific and detailed issues. An interim progress report was presented to TxDOT Administration shortly before the 81st Legislature adjourned, and another report was presented during the July 2009 quarterly meeting of district engineers, division directors and office directors.

In its final report, "*Work Group Findings and Recommendations*," presented to TxDOT Administration in October 2009, the group incorporated the following concepts into their recommendations: the critical need for reliable TxDOT financial forecasts to coordinate statewide planning and programming efforts; fiscal constraint in planning; and increased communication, transparency and accountability.

The report also recommended simplifying the UTP by reducing the number of categories of work, stressed that the UTP be multimodal, financially constrained and based on reliable cash flow forecasts. The group also suggested incorporating a new system of plans and programs in the UTP. They included a Vision Plan that focuses on statewide planning perspectives and efforts; a Project Development Plan that lists proposed projects with various levels of construction and development authorizations; and a Project Program that consists of a specified number of years' worth of projects. Like the rest of the UTP, these plans and programs would be based on financial forecasts and other cash flow considerations.

Texas Transportation Commission Minute Order 111891, dated July 30, 2009, outlined policies and guidance for appointing the Transportation Planning and Project Development Rulemaking Advisory Committee. The committee is charged with recommending changes to the department's transportation planning and project development programming rules. The 11-member committee includes representatives from large and small urban metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), counties, transit organizations, tolling authorities, small cities, councils of government and the Federal Highway Administration.

The department participated in several work meetings with the Rulemaking Advisory Committee and, based on input from the advisory committee, drafted planning and programming rules changes for Title 43, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 15. Notices for public comment were issued in the Texas Register on two different occasions as an opportunity for transportation partners and citizens to provide feedback on the potential changes to TxDOT's planning and programming rules.

Public comments are being used by the Rulemaking Advisory Committee and the department to form the basis for new proposed rules that establish a comprehensive transportation planning and project development program that is transparent, well-defined and understandable. The proposed rules recommend that TxDOT develop a long-range plan that outlines long-term transportation goals and provides for measurable targets; a mid-range plan that specifies criteria for project selection; defines funding categories, and defines planning, design and construction phases of major projects; and a short-term plan that details funding by phase, a right-of-way plan, a letting plan and progress summaries.

The rules further suggest that TxDOT's planning and project development program include: selection criteria for the department to include each MPO in the statewide transportation plan and be based on the Texas Transportation Commission's transportation goals and measurable targets; statewide connectivity project benchmarks and implementation guidelines; an extended cash forecast; funding formulas for transportation projects; allocation formulas for MPOs and related performance measures; flexibility provisions that allow TxDOT and MPOs to accelerate or delay projects based on cash forecasting; and consistent, clear and understandable reporting requirements.

On May 4, 2010, the Rulemaking Advisory Committee voted unanimously to bring the most recent version of the draft rules before the Texas Transportation Commission. The Texas Transportation Commission gave preliminary approval to the draft rules at its May 2010 meeting and, after a public comment period, it is anticipated that final adoption of the rules will be in August 2010.

Require TxDOT districts to develop detailed work programs driven by milestones for major projects and other statewide goals for smaller projects.

Start Date:
September 2008
End Date:
March 2010
Percentage completed to date:
100%, with continuing enhancements and improvements
Responsible Party:
Mary Meyland (SPPM) and Mark Marek (DES)

Summary: TxDOT has employed a new project management tracking program called Primavera 6 (P6). P6 allows program users to access information about transportation projects in one database in real time. P6 was instrumental in TxDOT's launch of Project Tracker.

Status details: In September 2008, TxDOT deployed the Project Development Management System (PDMS). PDMS was the department's internal, first-generation project management reporting system used to track milestones on projects under development. TxDOT used the source data within PDMS to launch Project Tracker. Project Tracker is an interactive project information database that serves as the gateway to all of TxDOT's project-related information. Project Tracker can be found on TxDOT's website, www.txdot.gov.

Project Tracker has been updated and enhanced to follow progress on special programs such as the

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and Riders 55 and 56 from the General Appropriations Act, 81st Legislature.

In September 2009, TxDOT introduced Primavera Version 6 (P6), the next generation of project management software tools, to give TxDOT managers real-time project schedules, and ensure accountability for project design resources.

P6 allows project managers to create project schedules for project development work beginning with preliminary tasks such as surveying, environmental clearance, right of way acquisition and utility coordination, through schematic and final planning, and contract letting.

By December 2009, the department had completed its introductory level P6 training for its project managers, and transferred project data from PDMS to the P6 system. The Project Tracker web-based reports began being supported by the P6 tool in March 2010.

Require TxDOT to establish, and provide funding and support for transportation planning in rural areas of the state.

Start Date:
February 2008
End Date:
August 2010
Percentage completed to date:
90%
Responsible Party:
John Ewald (OGC) and Jim Randall (TPP)

Summary: TxDOT has developed draft rules incorporating rural planning organizations into its planning and programming processes. Pending further public comment, final approval of those rules is expected in August 2010.

Status details: TxDOT staff submitted their recommendations on this issue to the House Transportation Committee's Subcommittee on Planning Authorities in May 2008. The Committee's interim report was issued later that year, recommending that the Legislature consider enabling legislation to create rural planning organizations. Legislation regarding this issue was contained in the conference committee report of HB 300. This language acknowledged that rural planning organizations can form under current statute, and would require the department to consider the recommendations of rural planning organizations in project and planning activities in those areas of the state. However, current law does not require the establishment of, or funding for, rural planning organizations.

To the extent possible without enabling legislation, TxDOT is considering revisions to its current planning and project development rules that will incorporate the concepts and intent of HB 300 regarding rural planning organizations. These rule changes are part of proposed revisions to the department's comprehensive planning and programming administrative rules being considered by the Transportation Planning and Project Development Rulemaking Advisory Committee. These draft

rules were given preliminary approval by the Texas Transportation Commission at its May 2010 meeting and, after a public comment period, it is anticipated that final adoption of the rules will be in August 2010.

Issue 3
Public Involvement

Require TxDOT to develop and implement a public involvement policy that guides and encourages more meaningful public involvement efforts agency wide.

Start Date:
July 2008
End Date:
November 2010
Percentage completed to date:
50%
Responsible Party:
Jefferson Grimes (GPA) and Dianna Noble (ENV)

Summary: Texas Southern University (TSU) is evaluating TxDOT's public involvement strategies and will make recommendations on a public involvement policy to the Texas Transportation Commission in November 2010.

Status details: A work group of representatives from TxDOT's Administration, Environmental Affairs, Government and Public Affairs, Transportation Planning and Programming Divisions, Office of General Counsel and Office of Civil Rights was established to define acceptable public involvement practices for department projects and programs. This group reviewed best practices from other states and minimum public involvement activities required by existing state and federal regulations, rules and policies. Additionally, this work group recommended an external evaluation of TxDOT's public involvement activities by TSU.

TSU is evaluating current practices and will make recommendations to improve TxDOT's public involvement process, as well as develop a public involvement policy that will be proposed to the Texas Transportation Commission for adoption.

In assessing TxDOT's public involvement activities, TSU will: collect information from TxDOT on existing public involvement tools; review public involvement meetings throughout the state to identify projects as case studies; determine criteria to assess TxDOT's public involvement methods; conduct interviews with a diverse mix of selected citizens who have attended or participated in TxDOT meetings or hearings; and attend a series of meetings, hearings and town hall forums to observe presentations, materials, the presenter's interface with the audience and meeting locations.

Once the information has been collected, TSU will synthesize it and develop draft recommendations which will be reviewed by TxDOT's work group. This work analysis will be conducted in August 2010. The work group will meet with TSU to discuss the recommendations and policy details before

drafting a final policy; a final report with TxDOT's public involvement policy will be ready in October 2010 and be ready for consideration by the Texas Transportation Commission at its November 2010 meeting.

Additionally, TxDOT has a public involvement training course. After adoption of the public involvement policy by the Texas Transportation Commission, this course will be revamped and possibly have additional courses added that will address the focus of the new policy.

Require TxDOT to develop standard procedures for documenting complaints and for tracking and analyzing complaint data.

Start Date:
April 2008
End Date:
October 2010
Percent completed:
50%
Responsible Parties:
Brent Dollar (GPA) and Ann Zeeck (GPA)

Summary: TxDOT is field testing and implementing a new complaint reporting and tracking system called CRAFT (Customer Relationship and Feedback Tracking). The system is slated to be operational statewide by October 2010.

Status details: In October 2007, TxDOT began identifying a solution to track citizen complaints based on the recommendations in the Sunset Advisory Commission's report. Initially, the department's existing electronic document management system (TxDocs) was used to track complaints because of its availability to all employees involved in the complaint process, and it was accessible by districts, divisions and offices who were managing correspondence documents, including complaints. The complaint process became one of four pilot projects selected in early 2008 by TxDOT's Electronic Data Management System 2 (EDMS2) Workgroup to increase use of the TxDocs system.

Beginning in April 2008, TxDOT developed a complaint business process through the EDMS2 Pilot workgroup project. A Customer Contact Team from each district, division and office was trained on the system, and in April 2009, the department began implementing the complaints process statewide in TxDocs. In the months that followed, TxDOT refined the complaint reporting process and improved data quality.

While TxDocs met some of the department's requirements for complaint tracking, the system continued to have limitations so TxDOT began the process of finding a suitable replacement. The Florida Department of Transportation's FDOTracker system was selected to replace the existing system, and is being adapted to TxDOT's architecture. The new system, which will replace TxDocs for complaint tracking, will be known as CRAFT (Customer Relationship and Feedback Tracking). The new system is slated to be operational statewide by October 2010.

TxDOT should provide a formal process for staff with similar responsibilities to share best practices information.

Start Date:

June 2008

End Date:

Initially completed in July 2008. Updates to the TxDOT intranet web and SharePoint sites are made continually. Best practices discussion items continue to be placed on the agenda of all statewide and regional staff meetings.

Percentage completed to date:

100% complete with continuing updates.

Responsible Party:

Ray Belk (HRD) and Tim Powers (RSC-North)

Summary: TxDOT has several methods for employees to share best practices information including SharePoint and team rooms on the department's internal online learning center, i-Way. In July 2010, TxDOT will launch an internal, centralized training and informational sharing video archive that will be available to all employees.

Status details: TxDOT has initiated numerous activities to share information across business units. Information sharing takes places in various forms.

SharePoint is used by division, district and region leadership and employees for internal sharing of information via posted documents, posting of questions and best practices and work on statewide initiatives.

Team Rooms are located on the department's Learning Management System (LMS) known internally as i-Way. This allows for private, public and moderated Team Rooms to be established, to post documents, have threaded discussions and share best practices. As of March 2010, there were 86 active Team Rooms used by various project teams.

Divisions, districts, offices and regions use Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to share common information and practices. SOPs are also documented in policy manuals and user manuals for technical and non-technical topics.

Desk references are also used at the business unit level. Many divisions, districts, offices and regions have adopted the use of desk references to map technical, administrative and non-technical processes which are shared across business units by posting to division's, district's, office's and region's internal websites. Numerous training courses and training events are held; these courses and events contain best practices as a part of the curriculum, along with open discussion sessions to share best practices. Networking is also encouraged as a part of these training courses so best solutions to common process and business applications can be discovered and discussed.

Many events and information sessions are recorded and placed on the department's internal website, Crossroads, or the i-Way. These sessions are distributed to divisions, districts, offices and regions for viewing in employee forums or business unit meetings. Beginning in July 2010, the department

will have the capability for a centralized training and informational sharing video archive that will be accessible to any employee on a work station to select and view recorded training, conferences, webinars and meetings. This new "Training Channel" will be administered by the department's Human Resources Division.

TxDOT should provide central coordination of the department's major marketing campaigns.

Start Date:
Fall 2008
Assessment Completed:
December 2008 (Outside consultant assessed TxDOT's current practice of separate marketing campaigns/purchase of media ads.)
End Date:
August 2010
Percentage completed to date:
75%
Responsible Party:
Coby Chase (GPA)

Summary: Following an outside consultant assessment of the department's marketing functions and campaigns, TxDOT is preparing a plan to centrally coordinate its marketing efforts.

Status details: Steve Simmons, Deputy Executive Director of TxDOT, is chairing an internal taskforce that will prepare a plan to centralize marketing, planning and advertising functions within the department. As part of that plan, the taskforce is identifying all campaigns and awareness efforts, personnel to bring under a unified system to handle contract administration, project oversight and budget, and centralizing coordination of the department's marketing efforts. In addition, the Government and Public Affairs Division is securing a pool of service providers to develop and produce materials and products for the department. This includes the consolidation of media buys referenced by the Sunset Advisory Committee. A request for proposals is being developed and a scheduled call for a pool of vendors will be available by September 1, 2010.

TxDOT should make its website easier to use.

Start Date:
Fall 2008
End Date:
November 2010
Percentage completed to date:
50%
Responsible Party:
Michael Sledge (GPA)

Summary: TxDOT has added new interactive databases to its website to allow visitors an opportunity to review construction information and track the department's performance on

27 different key measures. A usability study is being conducted so content delivery can be improved.

Status details: TxDOT's new, streamlined website was launched December 1, 2008. Project Tracker, which provides updated, detailed information on thousands of projects under development, was added to the website. In addition, information related to Rider 55 and Rider 56 from the 81st Legislature, General Appropriations Act, provides website visitors an interactive way to examine lists of congested roadways in the state, review pavement condition ratings, and examine how maintenance funds spent in their area will impact their roadways.

In March 2010, TxDOT Tracker was added to the department's website. Like its project counterpart, TxDOT Tracker is also an interactive database that allows users to view department performance measures such as construction, pavement conditions, traffic fatalities and various congestion indexes.

Updates to the website are regularly implemented based on public comments and feedback. With the assistance of an external entity, the department is currently evaluating the public's perspective of www.txdot.gov. This evaluation includes researching the usability and effectiveness of the website and examining opportunities to improve content delivery; this project is expected to run through Fall 2010.

Issue 4
Contracting Functions

Remove provisions in statute and rule requiring TxDOT to advertise its contract solicitations in local or statewide newspapers.

Start Date:
February 2009
End Date:
May 2009
Percentage completed to date:
100% complete, pending further action by the Legislature.
Responsible Party:
Bob Jackson (OGC)

Summary: Implementation of this recommendation requires legislation and rule changes.

Status details: TxDOT staff identified the statutes requiring changes to implement this issue and worked with the Sunset Advisory Committee and staff to further this recommendation. Legislation regarding this issue was contained in the conference committee report of HB 300. Absent the passage of HB 300 by the Legislature, the department must continue to advertise its contract solicitations in local and statewide newspapers. Any changes to rule will be deferred until after the 82nd Legislative Session.

TxDOT should develop clear communication policies regarding contract solicitations for its professional services contracts.

Start Date:

June 2008

End Date:

October 2008

Percentage completed to date:

100%

Responsible Party:

Janice Mullenix (GSD)

Summary: TxDOT has amended pertinent sections of its contract management manual to provide clearer communication policies.

Status details: The Contract Management Manual, Chapter 1, Section 4, was amended on October 1, 2008, to require development of a detailed communications plan and to specify the contents of that plan.

Contract Management Manual, Chapter 1, Section 7, was also amended to provide for execution of a non-disclosure statement by relevant contracting personnel on each contract. The Contract Services Section (CSS) of the General Services Division developed generic forms to develop a communications plan and a non-disclosure statement. CSS also worked with the divisions that oversee professional services contract procurements to create a customized form tailored to the most common types of professional services contracts. These templates are published online for department contract specialists. In early discussions with Sunset Advisory Commission staff during the review process, it became apparent that these areas needed review and strengthening. These changes were implemented in advance of the final Sunset Advisory Commission report. To promote overall compliance with department contracting policy and procedures, the General Services Division will submit this area to the Audit Office as a candidate for review as they develop their annual Audit Plan for the department. CSS will continue to solicit feedback from stakeholders and make improvements in the department's contracting practices as required.

TxDOT should provide additional information on overhead rates to districts and ensure that they use it.

Start Date:
July 2008
End Date:
October 2008
Percentage completed to date:
100% complete, with continuing updates. Ongoing efforts will result in periodic updates to overhead rate information provided to the districts, regions, divisions and offices, and contained within the Contract Management and Administration training course. The Contract Management and Administration training course is offered each year at various locations and times to ensure all appropriate personnel are provided with this training.
Responsible Party:
Camille Thomason (DES) and Janice Mullenix (GSD)

Summary: TxDOT has updated its required contract training to include negotiation and establishment of overhead rates, and has improved the process that provides overhead rate data to district and division contract negotiators.

Status details: The new Contract Management and Administration training course now covers negotiation and establishment of overhead rates. All department staff involved in contract negotiation is required to receive this training. The department has revised and improved the manner in which audited overhead rate data is provided to the district and division negotiators in the pre-negotiation reports. The Design Division's Consultant Contract Office Section (CCO) staff review negotiated overhead rates and compare them to the audited overhead rates in pre-negotiation reports prior to the execution of these contracts. They also are inputting and maintaining overhead rate data on a contract specific basis for future negotiations. These revisions have been presented to industry professionals. Refinements in the evaluation and negotiation of overhead rates will be developed and provided to the districts and divisions based on industry input and the analysis of data collected on completed negotiations.

TxDOT should set timeframes for each major step in the development of professional services contracts.

Start Date:
July 2008
End Date:
September 2008
Percentage completed to date:
100%
Responsible Party:
Camille Thomason (DES)

Summary: TxDOT has established specific time frames for each step in the professional service contract process. This is now standard operating procedure for the department's professional selection

service program.

Status details: Deadlines for each major step in the development of professional services contracts were established by the Design Division's Consultant Contract Office (CCO) defined in the attached September 2008 memorandum from TxDOT Administration. The memorandum established time frames for contracting processes. These processes are incorporated into TxDOT policy and manuals, and have been disseminated to all districts, regions, divisions and offices. To foster compliance with these processes, the Design Division will recommend this area during the department's annual audit program.

Additionally, department regional staff has established standard operating procedures, with more specific selection process time frames, to reach contract execution within 100 days of receipt of Letters of Interest. Those new time frames now replace the time frames established in 2008, and will be used by all users of the selection process inside and outside of region management.

TxDOT should consider providing additional staff to support its Consultant Contract Office.

Start Date:
September 2008
End Date:
September 2008
Percentage completed to date:
100%
Responsible Party:
Steve Simmons (DED)

Summary: TxDOT has assigned additional staff to the Consultant Contract Office. Filling these positions is pending the Texas Transportation Commission's review and action on the Grant Thornton report.

Status detail: Three additional staff positions were assigned to the Consultant Contract Office on September 1, 2008. These positions have not yet been filled pending the outcome of the Grant Thornton report, and any structural changes the Texas Transportation Commission may request.

The additional staff will have several duties including assisting with day-to-day routine agreement processing needs; providing assistance to division, district and regional contract users; and assisting in contract training, specifically by rewriting the Engineering, Architecture and Survey Services Contract Manual. Personnel hired in these positions will also assist in the following tasks: developing and implementing the Professional Services Contract Administration and Management System; standardizing the invoice for engineering, surveying and architecture contracts; maintaining contracting rules; updating all precertification categories; and developing additional guidance and resources to support the selection, negotiation and management phases.

Staff will also assist in the department's conversion to Electronic Data Management System (EDMS) and development of the Consultant Plans, Specifications and Estimates/Construction Evaluation Form.

The additional personnel will also facilitate in the delivery of the Consultant Errors and Omissions Correction and Collection Procedures (E&O) training, assist in updating the standard contract form, present at Small Business Briefings and other conferences and meetings and respond to audits, studies, and administrative requests.

TxDOT should strengthen oversight and accountability of professional services contracts in its district offices.

Start Date:
January 2009
End Date:
May 2010
Percentage completed to date:
100%
Responsible Party:
David Casteel (AEDDO)

Summary: TxDOT has moved some of its department responsibilities to multi-district regions. These regions allow the agency to consistently implement procedures that improve contract services.

Status detail: TxDOT has made significant progress toward modernizing the agency, including regionalizing some department functions to maximize workloads.

The department's regionalization efforts reduced the number of offices overseeing consultant contracts from 25 districts to four regions to allow for consistent and timely contract reviews. Regional directors and project development staff have developed detailed business implementation plans, including improved consultant selection, negotiation and management plans.

Professional contract managers in the regional offices lead procurement and contract negotiations to ensure consistent contract oversight is established and regional offices maintain contract oversight throughout the project. To ensure consistency, district project managers involved in specific tasks will be monitored by the regions. Divisions providing overall policy guidance are working with personnel in the four regions to ensure consistency and quality in the professional services contracting program. TxDOT has implemented consultant oversight measures, and completed service level agreements for participants from district, regional and division offices. Project schedules and budgets will be developed and updated yearly, and shared with industry stakeholders and districts. Final standard operating procedures were developed and reviewed in concert with industry, and those standard operating procedures were approved and implemented by January 2010. Training was completed in May 2010, along with the implementation of the standard operating procedures for regional, division and district staff. These same standard operating procedures are being considered for implementation with the various divisions that procure professional services, including Turnpike Authority, Aviation, Bridge, Environmental Affairs and Transportation Planning and Programming Divisions to name a few. The department is also considering using a cooperative procurement process to centralize functions that would be similar to the centralization used for divisions at the regional level.

TxDOT should require contract management training for its professional services project managers and other employees involved in professional services contract administration.

Start Date:

February 2009

End Date:

December 2010

Percentage completed to date:

90% complete

Responsible Party:

Janice Mullenix (GSD)

Summary: TxDOT has developed a two-part training curriculum for professional services contract administrators where employees can receive in-depth instruction on the correct handling of department contracting policies.

Status details: A mandatory training program has been developed for professional and scientific services contract employees. The mandatory training program consists of two parts. The first part is a one-day course offered via video teleconference to provide initial training for all existing contract managers on high-risk professional services contracts. More than 700 employees completed this class in 2009. This course is now available on the department's i-Way online training system for new and reassigned employees who require immediate training.

The second part of the program is a comprehensive four-day course curriculum on the details of professional and scientific services contracting. The four-day course for engineering, architecture, and surveying contracts (high-risk areas) was offered eight times in 2009 and will be offered five times in 2010. TxDOT plans to offer the training about four times a year. It is an instructor-led course with a maximum class attendance of 35 employees per session. This course is taught by highly experienced engineers and lawyers with detailed knowledge of TxDOT contracting needs and policies. To date, 397 employees have completed this course.