

CSS PEER EXCHANGE

HOW'S IT GOING?

Final report

December 8 – 9, 2010

Hilton Hotel, Downtown Springfield

Submitted by: Sherry Phillips, Susan Stitt, Eric Therkildsen, Dave Speicher, Candace Sauermann, Matt Hirtzel, Brad Risinger, Gwen Montgomery, Kathy McNeill, Rick Wanner, Jon-Paul Kohler and Doug Keirn.

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- The participants who gave their time and talent to make the Peer Exchange the success that it was

This report is a summary of the information discussed. Every effort was made to accurately reflect the views of the participants. Comments made by participants represent their own views and should not be construed to be Department views.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) has been used in Illinois since 2004. Training classes have been established and are still being held throughout the state. However, since the onset of CSS and the training classes, there has been no formal follow up to the overall use of the CSS process. The trainers have no way to know if they need to revise their classes to address concerns from practitioners. Therefore, a committee of CSS instructors and practitioners organized a CSS Peer Exchange. The purpose of the two day Peer Exchange was to simply ask the question: “How’s It Going?”

On December 8 and 9, 2010, approximately 70 CSS practitioners from around the State of Illinois gathered for the two day Peer Exchange to discuss “How’s It Going?” The group included District personnel, consultants, resource agencies, FHWA, as well as BDE. The two days included sessions on every aspect of conducting a CSS project from the Stakeholder Involvement Plans to eliminating alternatives.

The two days were divided into sessions in which a variety of topics were discussed at tables and as a whole. Two of the sessions, Consultant Feedback and CSS / NEPA Merger, were panel formats. The panelist answered prepared questions, and then took questions from the participants. Most of the other sessions involved table discussions with committee members serving as moderators and “reporting out” their table’s comments. All of the contents of the flip charts are documented in this report, as well as the dialogue and discussions that followed.

The Peer Exchange concluded with an exercise on how to make improvements in CSS Practice and / or CSS Policy. While the full recommendations are included in this report (see page 29), here are the top three recommendations from the participants:

- Create a CSS Sharepoint site to share best practices, examples of Stakeholder Involvement Plans and Context Audits, etc.
- Training, i.e. additional follow up training, more Peer Exchanges, specific training in CAG, Problem Statement, etc.
- Create a Liaison Management Authority. The central theme that recurred throughout the two day Peer Exchange was the lack of consistency from District to District. The existing CSS training covers the basics. However, once the Districts get involved with a CSS project questions emerge as to how to handle certain situations. A CSS Liaison would be the link for all Districts to manage the implementation of CSS consistently throughout the state. This position would also be responsible for implementing and maintaining a statewide CSS Share Point site and follow up with training needs.

This report covers all of the sessions including the discussions that followed. The Peer Exchange evaluations that were completed by the participants and the pre-attendance survey results are also included in this report.

Overall, the Peer Exchange was well received. Some of the comments from the evaluations included:

"This is an excellent exercise! Complements to IDOT in developing this Peer Exchange."

"Great opportunity to share CSS activities on real projects."

"Overall a great job!"

"It was a good mix of consultants, IDOT and regulatory agencies. Made for excellent conversations in exchanging ideas of CSS"



SESSION I – Welcome & Introductions

Susan Stitt welcomed the group by emphasizing the importance of their participation. She emphasized that only through an honest exchange of ideas would we get to the heart of “How’s It Going?”

Christine Reed, Director of Highways, said a few words of welcome. The Director stressed the importance of CSS and stated that if CSS fails, projects can be delayed or potentially fail. She encouraged the group to ask: “How do we mesh complete streets with CSS?” She further stated that the engineering community affects a lot of lives and it is important that we “get it right.”

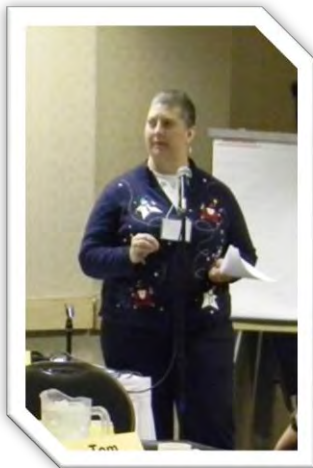
Susan then reviewed the overall aims for the two day Peer Exchange as follows:

- Identify improvements in the CSS process and fundamentals that can be consistent throughout the districts.
- Learn more about the CSS process by sharing stories about the various ways each key part of the process has been addressed in order to learn from each other.
- Develop better techniques by exploring successes and setbacks.
- Give resource agencies an understanding of the CSS process and how it benefits them and the public.
- Refine the CSS process to work better.



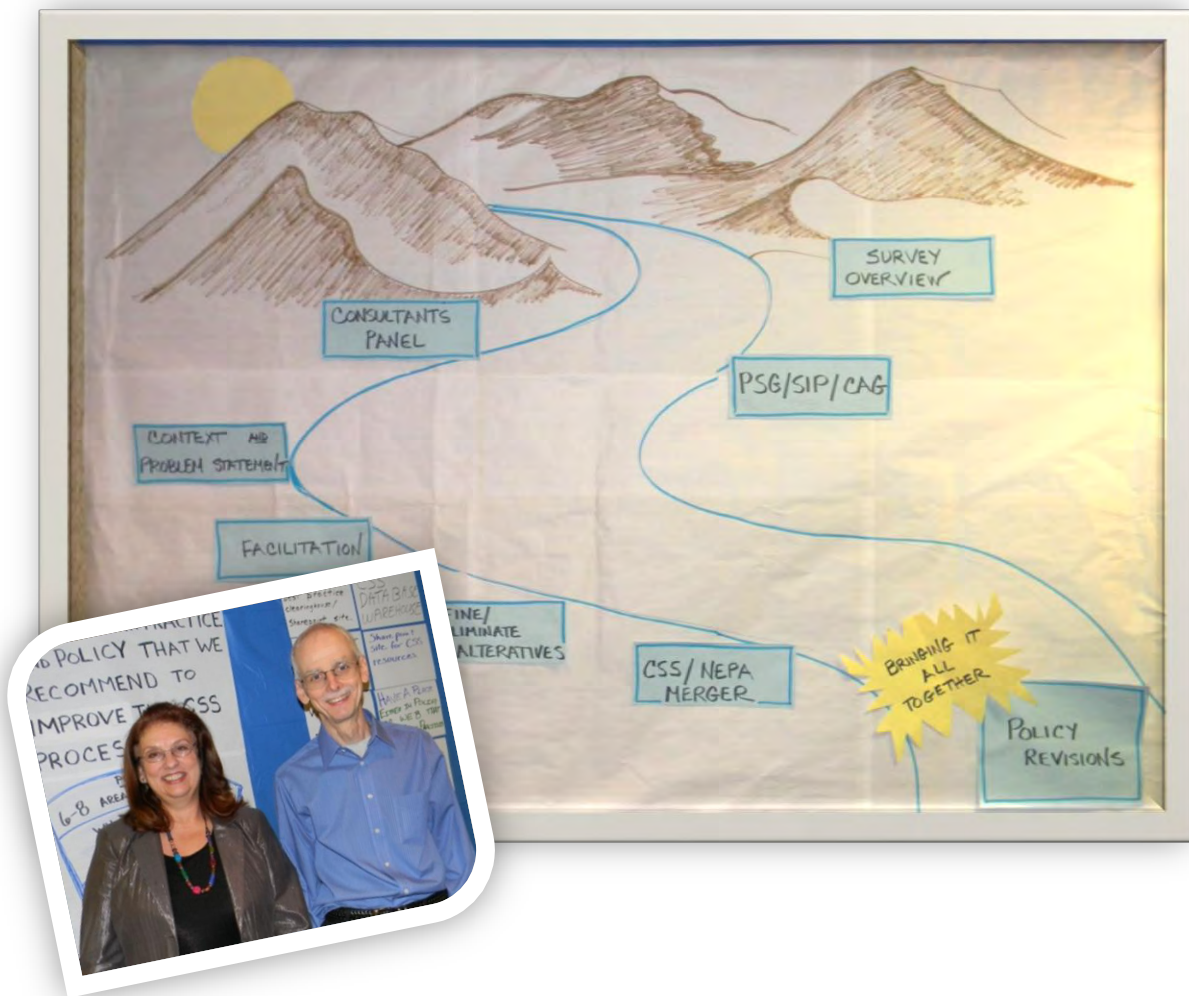
Susan directed each table to then introduce themselves to their table mates. Everyone shared one hope for the day at their table, and then each table shared one hope with the rest of the participants.

Some of the hopes for the day included:



- * “To talk about consistencies and inconsistencies of policies and between areas.”
- * “Concerned about CAGs and participants in CAGs truly representing people and not representing their own agenda.”
- * “Can’t make everyone happy. How do you say “no” and how it affects people.”
- * “Doesn’t take into consideration expectations of resource agency.”
- * “Streamline CSS processes”
- * “How to explain to public how to take something from engineering view and make them understand.”
- * “NEPA 404 merger process”
- * “How to move CSS to Phase II and III and meet expectations.”

Susan then introduced Judy Weddle and Dennis Jennings, trained facilitators from Facilitation Services Chicago www.facilitationerviceschicago.com. They were brought into the group to facilitate the two day event. Judy discussed the importance of sharing and bringing different perspectives into the discussion. She then went over her “River Image”. She used an image of a river with tributaries, explaining how over the next two days, all of the input would be like tributaries of a river, and at the end we would put the information together, learn from each other and perhaps make changes to practice and policy to enhance the CSS process in Illinois.



Dave Speicher, Peer Exchange committee member, reviewed some highlights of the pre-attendance survey. (See page 48 for a summary of the survey questions and responses). Overall, the participants had a significant amount of experience with 79% having worked more than 15 years in the transportation industry. Most (80%) are engineers and 82% had attended the two day CSS Approach class. A comparison of responses between District staff and consultants was fairly stereotypical with staff much more concerned with the time and costs of CSS than consultants.

SESSION II – Consultant Feedback

Judy introduced Jerry Payonk of Clark Dietz and Bridgett Jacquot of Volkert Engineering, the two guest panel members. Jerry and Bridgett were asked to be on the panel due to their experiences with CSS in multiple IDOT districts. Bridgett is the Environmental Manager at Volkert and has worked on two CSS projects and is about to begin another. Jerry has worked on five CSS projects, of which two are IDOT projects.

Judy asked, “Comparing District to District, or State to State, what are IDOT’s strengths in applying CSS?”

Bridgett responded that she believes in the process, it dictates that you reach out to stakeholders early in the process. It gives a chance to provide correct information, allows time to identify issues that surveys, etc, cannot pick up. The biggest benefit is getting out early and talking to people.

Jerry responded that transparency is the biggest benefit. It provides understanding about how we get to where we are. We can get buy in because the public understands.



The next question asked by Judy was, “What are their weaknesses?”

Bridgett responded with one weakness is the difference between IDOT and FHWA in how they do things. It makes it harder to have a well defined scope and, as a result, the time to complete Phase I is lengthened. There are no instructions in what is supposed to be in a stakeholder involvement plan. There needs to be consistency throughout the state.

Jerry responded with three things. First is keeping the CAG engaged, second is that it takes experienced people to do CSS and it works better when trust is established and people see the same familiar face at each meeting. Lastly, they are always rushing to make submittals to get public input.

Judy then asked: “If you could change one thing regarding IDOT’s procedures, what would it be?”

Bridgett suggested creating a procedural manual for starting a project.

Consultant Feedback Aims:

Hear and better understand the role and the work of the consultants as related to the CSS process

View differing interpretations of CSS and the appropriateness of this in differing contexts

Learn how CSS is working in different districts

Identify the breakthrough actions and the specific challenges of the CSS process

Jerry suggested prequalification requirement for CSS. This would force more people to go to training for CSS.

Judy's last question was, "What has been the most frustrating part of using CSS?"

Bridgett's response was to know what is right and what is wrong for each project. As an example, she is working on a project and 16 different corridors were created by the CAG. The consulting team felt that some of the corridors could be combined, however since the CAG developed the 16 corridors, they were directed to fully investigate all 16. Bridgett felt that if there was better direction in the CSS process the consultant team could have narrowed down the study options. What are the steps?

Jerry's response was getting a true diversity in CAG groups. Making sure the group is truly representative.

Judy then asked each table to have a discussion and, on their table's flip chart, list recommendations for improvement. They were then asked to select one key recommendation to share with the room. The key recommendations were as follows:

- * Find basic requirements for CSS, will improve consistency.
- * Time frames for CSS projects, projects lose momentum; it is hard to get people to come back to meetings.
- * Efficiency, need to spend more time on the meat of the work that needs to be done.
- * Selecting the right CAG members is a key to success.
- * Sharing experiences with the goal of maintaining flexibility.
- * Consistency, sharing processes throughout districts that lead to best practices.
- * Well defined scope, adapt to fit project.
- * Expand the policy, use stakeholder involvement plans that have worked for consistency.
- * Have a CSS advocate as the consultant manager for the CSS projects.
- * Either the project is a CSS project or not, need flexibility with that decision.
- * Advocacy varies with each district with senior level management. And how to quantify hours from district to district and how many people varies.

SESSION III – PSG / SIP / CAG

Sherry Phillips opened Session III by reading the definitions for Project Study Group (PSG), Stakeholder Involvement Plan (SIP), and Community Advisory Group (CAG). The room was divided into three groups, one for each topic. Each table was asked to share key concerns regarding their topic. Then they discussed recommendations for those concerns. The items were listed on flip charts and then shared with the room.

PSG/SIP/CAG Aims:

Shared understanding of how the selecting, creating, planning, developing and implementation of PSG, SIP, CAG is going

PSG concerns / recommendations:

- * Issue: PSG large at beginning, smaller later, emphasis on defining key staff.
- * Consultants as PSG – IDOT needs to understand what consultants need.
- * Flexibility depending on point in process
- * Having the right people, involve diverse group in PSG.
- * PSG needs to maintain multi-disciplinary group. All facets need good representation.
- * Dynamics of PSG, how it works, what works and what doesn't. Depending on group some things work better than others.
- * Issue: programming, have project specified (scoped) at start of CSS process, very frustrating for IDOT.



CAG concerns / recommendations:

- * Issue: how do CAG and PSG interact? Interaction is being requested but not allowed at present.
- * How to bring in local planning issue?
- * How to make sure all voices are heard and get people engaged.
- * Solutions: survey the stakeholders with good questions.
- * Use different format to engage people.
- * Break people up into different groups. Assign seats and then move around.
- * Zip code mailing
- * Invite everyone to be a member of CAG, let them pick their own members.
- * Hard to get CAG members
- * Limiting number
- * Understanding their roles and commitment
- * Make sure represent group and not just personal interests.

- * Consultant must have trained facilitator
- * Might be a point where CSS isn't needed (if no interest)
- * Someone to keep on track
- * Concern of mistrust – rumors
- * Solution – through CAG leads to less rumors
- * Post meeting minutes on web site (have a website)
- * When look at number of CAG meetings, look at milestones, talk about in number of CAG meetings as opposed to number of months or years.



Discussion question from room: when selecting CAG members and have a project with twelve homes, all twelve people want to sit on CAG. People insist on sitting on CAG.

Recommendation from room: Open to the public. Adjourn meeting and then take comments from public. Pod casts.

Discussion question from room: any ideas on trying to gain participation from people who don't live on property. People are only concerned about their property.

Recommendation from room: put up billboards advertising project, or use changeable message boards along the route to advertise meetings.

SIP concerns / recommendations:

- * Learning curve involved when developing SIP.
- * Recommendation: create a clearinghouse of SIP, via SharePoint. Also have a more narrowed training session when developing SIP.
- * Make sure you have correct people in developing SIP, make sure people involved understand SIP and process that is involved in developing SIP.
- * Defining consensus, policy definition opens IDOT up to criticism.
- * Issue: timing of when SIP written.
- * Recommendation: proceed by advance outreach to stakeholders, identify stakeholders and personalities.
- * Place more emphasis in SIP on one on one interviews to identify problems, needs and solutions.
- * Define and explain why IDOT is final decision maker.
- * Need a good mix of stakeholders
- * Issue: How to replace people in SIP.
- * Recommendation: create guidelines for replacements, develop application for SIP.
- * Streamline (SIP) approval process
- * Consistency and ground rules in the district

- * Create a link to approved SIP's.
- * CAG privacy issues, there is a lot of private information in SIP regarding CAG members.

SESSION IV – Context Audit / Problem Statement

Candace Sauermann led the session with definitions of Problem Statement (a concise narrative defining the fundamental situation or circumstances to be solved) and Context, (weaving parts into a whole.) The tables were divided into two groups, one discussed Context Audit and the other reviewed Problem Statement.

Key issues & recommendations for Context / Context Audit:

- * Make sure to ask good questions (in the Audit), not just yes or no questions.
- * Modify Context Audit or leave it as in the policy?
- * Should you give it to all stakeholders or just CAG?
- * Recommendation: develop guidelines for things to consider when deciding who should get the Audit.
- * Context Audit is a tool to start discussion and set focus.
- * Insight: context doesn't always agree with alternative selection.
- * Get Context Audit done early, before it is influenced.
- * Tailor questions to what is relevant to project.
- * Do give Context Audit to whole group and should be project specific.
- * Audit form should be adapted for the project.
- * Name should be changed to "Community Context Survey"
- * Make a display of results of information and values.
- * Do not release information early, need to meet with stakeholders early.
- * Revise and/or edit audit form
- * Recommendation: create a sample audit in word document so people can edit to use for different projects.
- * Insight: get consensus on results; make sure consensus is related to project.

Clarity questions regarding Context Audit:



Context/Problem Statement Aims:

Learn about a variety of ways the Problem Statement has been developed.

Recognize the challenges and benefits of the development of the Problem Statement and alternative actions for dealing with difficulties

Understand what a Context Audit is and how it is being used

What is first, Context Audit or Problem Statement? Some people do context first and that is not how it is set up in policy.

There was a discussion regarding consensus. Some of the participants felt clarification of the definition was needed. You should work with the CAG to agree that items identified in the Audit are important to all of the CAG. Make sure the CAG is in agreement. Compile the results of the Audit. (Do not disregard survey results.) The participants were asked by a show of hands, who altered the Context Audit for a project? Several participants raised their hands.



A majority of participants are doing Context Audit first then Problem Statement.

The participants were then asked if there is a benefit to doing Problem Statement first. The response was that they looked at the Audit as issues and concerns and take them into account when developing a problem statement.

Comment: (a participant) worked on Context Audit with Scott Stitt, it is flexible and can be changed. It is meant to be used as a tool to get to problem statement.

Key issues & recommendations for Problem Statement:

- * Question: Is the Problem Statement the same as Purpose and Need statement? Answers: They should not contradict each other. No, but they should have similarities. Context Audit does flush out some issues.
- * Context Audit can help distinguish between problem and perceived problem.
- * Everyone should get Context Audit (stakeholders). Example: Meredosia Bridge project.
Question: someone asked for clarification of what is a stakeholder? Answer: anyone involved in the project from beginning that have not been assigned to the CAG. Anyone at the meeting.
- * Problem statement can be too large and it is difficult to find real problem.
- * Recommendation: PSG needs to make concise purpose and need statement.
- * Question: How do you make it work? PSG needs to make sure Problem Statement stays current, especially between phase I and phase II. This is the responsibility of the PSG.
- * Concise and simple so everyone can understand.
- * Problem Statement is a precursor to statement of need.
- * Recommendation: keep focus on Problem Statement as things progress. Remember Safety, capacity, etc.
- * Problem Statement is flexible as opposed to Purpose and Need statement.
- * There is a disconnect between Problem Statement and policy – policy doesn't capture true problem just perceived problem. Is Problem Statement supposed to be perceived problem or real problem?
- * Is the problem statement accurate according to IDOT or stakeholders?

- * Comment: ask what stakeholders think the problem is and then use that to help shape your view and then develop purpose and need.
- * Comment: Problem Statement is their opinion, before Purpose and Need.
- * Comment: If there is a perceived problem, we have to confirm or refute it. Show the Problem Statement and Purpose and Need and then go on. Problem Statement and Purpose and Need are to remind them of where we are.
- * Comment: the whole idea is if there is a problem it needs to be in the Problem Statement. It doesn't matter if IDOT doesn't see the problem if the community thinks there is one; whether it is perceived or actual, then there is a problem.
- * Problem Statement can be too specific or narrow. It needs to address the big picture. You need a facilitator to keep people on track. Part of good facilitation – agenda with good timeline, dry runs, don't want to steer people, but need to guide them.
- * Problem Statement serves as a mission statement to project direction.
- * Involve public – take public and technical and merge together.
- * Prioritize problems and techniques.
- * Example from table participant for bypass project: started the project with no preconceived solution. They identified activities to engage stakeholders, used maps, flip charts to make lists, everyone got \$100 to prioritize what they thought the problem was, had to divide their money to prioritize, which is how consensus was reached.

SESSION V - Facilitation

Dave Speicher and Candace Sauermann led a group discussion regarding facilitation.

- * Question: Has anyone hired an outside facilitator to do CAG meeting?
- * District 4 answer: They hired Judy and Dennis for their project. It worked out real well; they are able to keep the group on task.
- * Question: What makes a good facilitator?
- * Answer: Starts with listening, keep it on track, being able to answer questions at the time, trying not to offer their own opinion, which may be easier with outside facilitator.
- * Question: Has answering technical questions been a problem? (With using an outside facilitator)
- * Answer: It is important that facilitator know who to turn to in order to get answers. Have the right people present.
- * Answer: Make sure outside facilitator doesn't try to "sell" CSS. Stick to the project and what needs to be done.
- * Answer: Keep technical team involved and engage people.
- * Comment: Prepare general fact sheet that project team can memorize so they all will be on the same page at the meeting.
- * Comment: A good facilitator is being able to step into an issue and get the group on track and

focused. They need to know when to step in. Part of good facilitation is knowing your limits.

- * Comment: The best time to get trust is at the beginning of the project.
- * Question: What would be a good reason to have a non-technical facilitator?
- * Answer: It allows discussion to go in a direction that it might not go with a technical facilitator.
- * Comment: You need to establish frequently asked questions ahead of time.
- * Comment: Hiring an outside facilitator may help to establish trust because people will see them as unbiased.
- * Comment: A facilitator has to know people (be a people person).
- * Question: When we hire consultants to do CSS

Facilitation Aims:

Understand the importance of a good facilitator

Understand benefits and drawbacks of hiring an outside facilitator

Learn a variety of ways to move discussion along

Identify good facilitation



- process we assume a facilitator will be part of that. How do consultants meet that goal?
- * Answer: You should look for prequalified facilitator. Have they facilitated before? How often? Etc.
 - * Comment: Make it clear you want a trained facilitator (ask for resume).
 - * Comment: Even with resume, you may not get a good facilitator.
 - * Comment: Prequalification limits you. You have to trust they are giving you the right person at the right cost.
 - * Comment (from consultant): It is on a meeting by meeting basis. You need to think about it before every meeting because the facilitator may be good for one meeting but not for another.
 - * Comment: Agree with that for stakeholders meeting, but not for CAG (they want the same familiar face).
 - * Comment: Want to give public opportunity to get to know IDOT people to establish trust. Want to work together with consultants not have consultants “do our work”.
 - * Comment from District 1: If we hire a consultant, it is expected that the consultant will provide a facilitator.
 - * Comment from consultant: Consultants may need to ask more questions and need to know expectations up front.
 - * Comment: Training, listening and practice are very important and anyone is welcome to do what they are comfortable with.
 - * Observation: District 3 does CSS very similar to District 7. There is a misconception that IDOT cannot do their own facilitation. It is sometimes due to lack of staff, not expertise.
 - * It was noted that IDOT has trained facilitators on staff. Utilizing IDOT staff may be the best option and should be considered.

HIGHLIGHTS OF DAY ONE

Some of the reflections from the participants after the first day of the Peer Exchange:

- * Like the idea of posting the approved SIP and Problem Statements on a SharePoint site.
- * Cookies
- * Stressed that CSS is a flexible and modular process (Scott reiterated that is the intent of the policy).
- * There is a need for CSS/IDOT manager for consistency.
- * Like the way that the Peer Exchange has been handled.

Dennis asked: Where have you experienced a little shift in thinking?

- * Glad to know he is not the only one who struggles with CSS.
- * We have come a long way and today's Peer Exchange is proof.
- * Interested in different ways to use Context Audit and that people are modifying it.



DISCUSSION ABOUT CONSENSUS

Day two started with a discussion about consensus. The question was asked: “Is there still a problem about using consensus?”

Definition of consensus as stated in the policy: *“A majority is in agreement, while the dissenting remainder agrees that their input has been heard.”*

Example from a participant: Consensus did work well on a project when the CSS steps were followed and 60 percent of the CAG were in agreement, then the ones that didn’t agree were given an opportunity to voice their concerns.

Comment: Consensus opens IDOT up to criticism. We could be criticized for not achieving consensus, but policy dictates that IDOT does not have to reach consensus.

Comment: On one District project, the CAG had a whole question and answer session on consensus. Sometimes a CAG will find using consensus very important, and confuse it with a “vote.”

Question: Can a CAG agree on what consensus is?

Comment: it would take too much time and too many meetings, IDOT could lose control.

Recommendation: Revise definition of consensus to a sense of general agreement.

Question: If you don’t use a vote, then how do you determine that a majority is in agreement?

Comment: “I’ll know it if I see it. You have to be able to get a feel for the people.”

Comment: Ask the group if they agree that it is okay to move on. Then move on unless there are strong objections.

Comment: Sometimes you have to be blunt and say, “No more changes!” And move on.

Comment: It can also be difficult to know you have reached consensus if you have 15 to 20 people on the CAG and then half of them do not show up to the meeting.

SESSION VI – Defining and Eliminating Alternatives

Sherry Phillips opened the Defining and Eliminating Alternatives session by explaining the purpose of this topic. Each group was to present a CSS project and how they defined and eliminated alternatives and what techniques were used. They were also asked to share their success stories.



Reports:

The first table described a District 7 project that used a consensus building workshop to define alternatives. For their project, they had the CAG grouped at tables, asked them to individually draw three alternatives on their own 11 x 17 aerial photographs. Then they asked the tables to discuss their ideas and agree on three alternatives and draw them on the 24” x 36” aerial map. Then the groups came together and combined their ideas onto one large scale drawing. At subsequent meetings, they held several discussions to eliminate these alternatives, as well as using colored dots to have the CAG select the ones they wanted to carry forward.

Define/Eliminate Alternatives Aims:

Hear innovative ways this has been handled

Understand the challenges and how they have been met

Another project discussed was an urban project in District 2. They divided the project into four segments and let the groups look at alternatives. They had each group look at two alternatives. Their “aha” moment: make sure you do your homework and anticipate things ahead of the meeting.

The high speed railroad project in Springfield was also discussed. They used a mass mailing to notify a diverse group that a CAG was being formed. They had four different CAGs made up of different factions. They worked with each CAG to define alternatives before going to a public meeting.

The Meredosia Bridge project was discussed next. IDOT came up with several alternatives ahead of the meeting. They had a CAG workshop and reduce the alternatives to eight. The CAG asked to meet with the consultants without IDOT. The CAG developed a new alternative on their own which became the preferred alternative. This alternative ended up costing a lot less than any of the original ideas.

A twenty-six mile corridor was discussed. The consultant gave the CAG “Engineering 101” and “Environmental 101” to get them started. Then they used transparencies at each table, with each table reporting their options. They ended with 16 alignments. The consultant noted that the glue that provides consistency is FHWA. The key to the process was a detailed matrix that they went through (safety, environment impacts, etc.). They asked if the alternatives meet the Purpose and Need and eliminated the ones which didn’t. This was a very exhausting process, but the system is working as they are now down to two alternatives.

An urban reconstruction project in District 2 was the next project discussed. They used CADD during a CAG meeting to draw details little by little and then reviewed the drawing details by panning through so the CAG could see the impacts. A developer was at the next meeting, after an alternative was selected. The developer didn’t like the alternative and tried to change CAG’s decision. A CAG member told the developer that they live there, not him, and this is not safe, and to just sit down, it was time to move on.

Another urban project used a model and aerial photograph. The “aha” moment was when the CAG realized that it wasn’t as easy as it looked.



A bridge project was presented where the District used interactive graphics of structure options. This allowed the CAG to change things and also showed the difference in cost. By using this method, it became obvious what the choice needed to be.

A rural corridor project was discussed next. The project team put no limitations on the CAG when they were drawing their alternatives during the brainstorming session. The project team had to quantify the impacts for all sixteen, 1400 foot wide corridors. Comment from the group discussion this project: A recommendation was made that IDOT needs to have the ability to eliminate some corridors.

One group sent the fifty CAG members maps so they could draw their alignment ideas at home. During the meeting they were set at six tables and each table had to come up with three ideas. This method helped reduce the number of alternatives to investigate.

Other suggestions:

- Use a landscape architect to create visuals for the CAG to see what their ideas will look like.
- Let the public draw lines, not just the CAG.
- Break projects up into segments into urban / rural sections, or even within an urban section.
- Be flexible on the alternatives.
- Voting can be used, there has to be an appropriate time and way by using a good facilitator.

- One group told the CAG which ideas that IDOT was comfortable with which helped narrow down the alternatives.

Question asked: Was there ever a final decision that the CAG did not like?

Response: the Route 51 EIS project was down to two alternatives, both affecting the same neighborhood. The neighborhood started a petition and at least two CAG members signed the petition asking IDOT to look at more options. The neighborhood didn't feel like they were represented on the CAG.

Lesson learned: Make sure there is good representation on the CAG. When the CAG was reformed, the project team asked the CAG who else needed to be there. The community helped reach out to potential CAG members to make sure the right representation was there.

SESSION VII – CSS / NEPA Merger Panel

Judy introduced the panel and asked them prepared questions. Then the panelist answered questions from the participants.



Panelist:

- * Matt Fuller, FHWA
- * Terry Savko, Department of Agriculture
- * John Betker, US Army Corps of Engineers

Question: How does your agency impact the CSS process?

Matt Fuller response: We get involved in complex environmental impact statements. We use the NEPA 404 merger process to bring projects that have impact on wetlands.

When CSS projects start and the District develops the SIP, we see how to fit in. We try to participate as much as possible especially PSG meeting. We try to attend meetings to get a feel for public.

John Betker response: NEPA, all federal agencies have to comply with NEPA, federal license and permits. Streamline process and NEPA documents have all necessary information so it satisfies their requirements and can issue permit. CSS is baseline level to give general understanding of NEPA requirements that come into play when developing alternatives.

Terry Savko response: Department of Agriculture is involved anytime federal dollars are used to convert agricultural land to non agricultural land use. They are notified to look at the project and the impact. They prefer compact, continuous development.

Next question: What does your agency need from IDOT CSS projects?

Matt response: FHWA needs to be actively involved, especially in developing the Purpose and Need and be a part of the process of developing and review ahead of time. Is this defensible if it goes to court? Do we have a strong rationale? When decision is being made? Keep in mind FHWA is also part of group, as well as the public, when developing CSS projects.

CSS/NEPA Merger Aims:

Greater understanding of the CSS process and acceptance of the approach

Opportunity for greater collaboration and partnering

Learn about ways to potentially streamline the process

John response: the Corps tries to let CSS eliminate ones that are not feasible. If he can help understand NEPA 404, he is not against coming to a CAG meeting and will back out if he is not needed.

Terry response: concerned with survey and Purpose and Need. Concerned with zoning. Impact to farmer is addressed.

Judy then asked the following question: What are your recommendations for IDOT and your agency to work together better?

Matt response: doing a good job, having monthly meetings praise for IDOT and how handling CSS process.

John response: agrees with Matt. Most of the concerns were addressed. He feels that he has good

communication with most districts. The process is working. Rarely have problems. Disagreements are mainly from a lack of information. Example: consultants didn't have all impact decisions before making decisions to eliminate alternatives.



Terry response: She is mostly aware of IDOT projects. She needs a heads up if Ag land will be affected. Impact on Ag very important! Doesn't want too much information too early, just keep her informed.

Last prepared panel question: What are recommendations about ways your agency might change to make working with IDOT easier or better?

Matt: interested in keeping project on track. System is working as is, but is open to suggestions.

John: if there are issues let him know.

Terry: glad things have worked so well and glad to see wise decisions are being made. The process does work.

Question from audience: How does public involvement influence decisions?

John response: they consider all public interest factors, each carry different weight (wetland vs. noise). Have to listen to public. If a consensus is made, it will be recognized. It needs to be brought to his attention. It may change alternatives. Have to look at whole picture.

Question from audience: How does FHWA feel about public opinion on one alternative over another?

Matt response: if alternative are similar and one is chosen over another, they will look at reason and take that into consideration.

Question from audience: When talking about coordination effort, is it better to meet one on one or have a meeting with all present? What is the best way to keep resource agencies informed?

Matt response: use NEPA 404 for scoping and concurrence on major milestones. Kind of a project manager decisions. Depends on what is going on.

Question from audience: Are individual meetings more helpful?

John: tough question. Depends on the project and who it is going to affect. Bounce the issues off Matt first, but John's agency is available.

Comment: environmental people are used as scapegoats if project is taking too long and that isn't always the case.

John: IDOT has the expertise to eliminate alternatives. IDOT has to make the decisions. It is not for him to argue. By the time we get to his level of participating and alternatives are narrowed and some major alternatives are getting eliminated without any basis then he has to ask why and as long as it can be explained he is okay dropping them.

Recommendation: Have a meeting with the resource agencies early on for complex projects.

Question: Are you seeing higher quality alternates for projects that went through the CSS process?

Matt: CSS has made a big difference and the quality has improved.

John: CSS eliminates a lot of general public concern and the public's concerns are now incorporated into alternatives. It has helped a lot.

Terry: We need to see more alternatives if it is going to impact Agriculture. Needs more info.

Question: Could you talk about pre-NEPA phase (corridor study) and corridors being dropped.

John: you are going to drop alternatives that are not cost effective. At your earliest convenience we want to see corridors regarding impact on wetlands.

Question: is it okay to combine similar corridors since we are not really dropping them, does this need defended?

Matt: it needs to be documented as to why the corridors were combined. So they can see reasonable range of alternatives.



John: Agrees that justification of why corridors were dropped is needed. Will just need to use your best judgment.

Question: Are you (resource agencies) coming back to IDOT and saying “we want qualitative data”?

John & Matt & Terry: all agree that if you have questions, just call the resource agencies and ask.

The groups then had discussions at their tables regarding what they heard and what recommendations they may have.

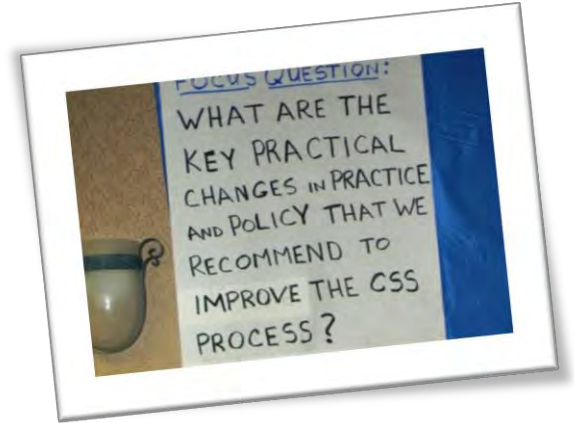


Recommendations / questions:

- * Is there anything that the District’s can do to speed up the timeframe for submittals of packets for the NEPA 404 merger meetings? There are three meetings a year and the lead time is three to four months, so if you don’t get concurrence at a meeting, you have already missed the deadline for the next meeting.
- * A larger meeting room would be nice.
- * Clarify in CSS when and who needs to review SIP.
- * Expertise on some projects needs to stay with FHWA.
- * Call the resource agencies to share project information; communication is important, including with the FHWA.
- * Integrate the environmental aspects of the project into the CAG. The agencies need to be present (at CAG meetings).
- * Set up a website that generates updates for the resource agencies.
- * Resource agencies should consider allowing CCS documentation for NEPA / 404 merger meetings to eliminate duplication of effort.
- * Make sure agencies know what is going on before concurrence.
- * Driving through the projects with the agencies has been successful on some projects.

SESSION VIII – Policy Changes and Recommendations

Dennis led the participants through a consensus building workshop to answer the focus question: “What are the key practical changes in practice and policy that we recommend to improve the CSS process?” The workshop demonstrated a facilitation technique using a “sticky wall.” This method was well suited for this discussion because it allows every voice to be heard. This technique was also demonstrated to illustrate a



Policy Revisions:

Develop recommendations for changes in CSS policies and practices

technique that can be used during CSS projects to assist in reaching consensus on various topics.

Dennis first asked each person to individually answer the question and make a list of three to five recommendations.

Then the participants paired up and consolidated their recommendations to three, then each table agreed upon four

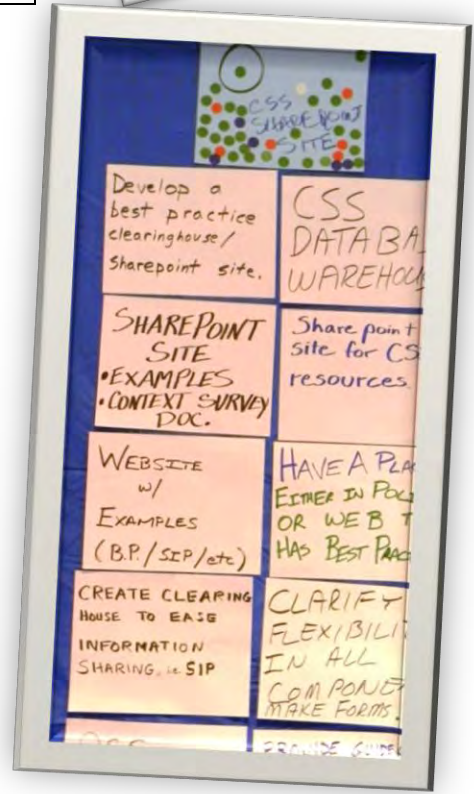
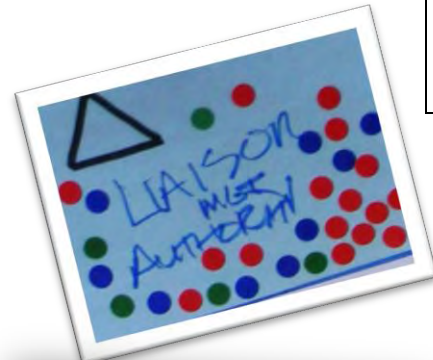
recommendations to answer the focus question. The ideas were grouped on the sticky wall and categorized (see table on next page).

The participants were given colored dots to place on the categories as to what is most important to them. The dots were counted and given a weighted value of three “points” to the green, two for blue and one point for red. The dots were tabulated and the category with the most points of 100 was **CSS Sharepoint Site**. The next most important was **Training** with 74 points and the third choice was **Liaison Management Authority** with 50 points.



WHAT ARE THE KEY PRACTICAL CHANGES IN PRACTICE AND POLICY THAT WE RECOMMEND TO IMPROVE THE CSS PROCESS?

CSS SharePoint Site 100 pts		Training 74 pts	Liaison Management authority 50 pts	CSS Applications 9 pts	Definitions 24 pts	Stakeholder Involvement Plan 10 pts	Resource Agencies 11 pts	Qualifications 5 pts	Misc.
Develop a best practice clearinghouse – SharePoint site.	CSS database warehouse	Additional training in CSS components (CAG, SIP, Problem statement, etc.)	Have a CSS “Czar”. Both in District and BDE	Find a way to halt CSS if unproductive	Better define key terms “consensus” “stakeholder” etc.	Emphasize SIP importance	Less than four months for NEPA submittal	Initiate CSS prequalification	Guidelines to merge CSS with complete streets 6 pts
SharePoint site w/examples, context survey doc. Etc.	SharePoint site for CSS resources	Training in CSS Facilitation Public Inv.	Create central liaison to manage CSS resources	Clarify when CSS must be done.	Re-define the term “consensus” in policy	Develop SIP first to help define scope	Get the right reps on the CAG (agencies, elected officials, etc.)	Prequalification for CSS	Identify CSS projects in MYP 2 pts
Website w/examples (B.P./SIP, etc)	Have a place either in policy or web that has best practices	More training and Peer Exchanges	Consistency in CSS process (Internal advocate / manager)	Modify policy to allow for CSS on all projects.	Clarify policy definition of Problem Statement and how it relates to Purpose and Need		Involve resource agencies in CSS meetings.		All CSS projects should have a website
Create clearinghouse to ease information sharing, i.e. SIP	Clarify flexibility in all components, make forms .docx	Training	Obtain CSS “buy –in” at all levels of IDOT.	More guide on when CSS and stopping CSS	Revise consensus definition				Require qualified facilitator 1 pt
CSS advocate and SharePoint site	Provide guidelines and examples of CSS deliverables (on website?)	Provide additional follow-up training	Advocate person(s) for CSS		Re-name the context “audit” a context “survey”				
					Better define consensus				



COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

After listening to the participants and discussing it as a committee, we recommend the following be implemented as soon as possible:

Create a liaison position for CSS. This person would need a minimal staff of two others (one full time technical and one part-time clerical), along with a travel budget. This person should be experienced with using CSS in the real world, have a technical background in order to explain IDOT and FHWA policies to the project teams and stakeholders, and possess strong leadership skills. Their duties would include:

- * Develop and maintain a SharePoint site to house examples of Stakeholder Involvement Plans, Context Audits, and any other documentation available from projects around the state. Create and monitor a discussion board, similar to “Ask the Secretary” for all CSS practitioners to access.
- * Make decisions as necessary to ensure CSS is being applied throughout the state as uniformly as possible, and in accordance with the law.
- * Attend Community Advisory Group and public meetings for the various CSS projects throughout the state. Post any “best practices” being used to the Share Point site.
- * Answer questions from CSS practitioners regarding best practices and/ or policy requirements.
- * Oversee CSS training. The suggestions from the Peer Exchange included specialized training for some of the steps involved in implementing CSS, i.e. writing Stakeholder Involvement Plans and Problem Statements. The Liaison will be responsible for creating and implementing all CSS related training.

Another recommendation from the committee is to reorganize CSS Steering Committee. The original committee focused on implementing the new CSS law by creating policy, training and communication. Basically, they were tasked with getting CSS up and running in the Department, which has been accomplished. The Steering Committee now needs to focus their energy on addressing some of the concerns discussed during the Peer Exchange. This can best be done by including new Steering Committee members with CSS practical experience.

The following topics were identified by the participants as practical changes in practice and policy to consider, followed by the committee recommendation for action:

Topic	Action
CSS Share Point site:	Assign to new CSS Liaison
Training:	Assign to new CSS Liaison
Liaison Management Authority	Create new position
Definitions:	CSS Steering committee send recommendation to BDE for consideration.
Resource Agencies:	CSS Liaison work with FHWA to streamline process.
Stakeholder Involvement Plan:	Create training class for SIP. (CSS Liaison responsibility).
CSS Applications:	CSS Steering committee send recommendation to BDE for consideration.
Guidelines to merge CSS with Complete Streets	CSS Steering committee send recommendation to BDE for consideration.
Qualifications:	CSS Steering committee discuss benefits and drawbacks of adding a prequalification. Implement as needed.
Identify CSS projects in MYP	CSS Steering committee discuss implementation.
Require qualified facilitator	CSS Steering committee discuss benefits and drawbacks of this requirement. Implement as needed.

FLIP CHART CONTENTS

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Sherry

- ✓ IDOT needs an internal advocate as the consultant manager. Either it is CSS or not.
- ✓ Not every CSS project (by definition) should be CSS.
- ✓ Need a good facilitator.
- ✓ Impact of resource agencies and bridge office after consensus has been reached (having to go back to CAG)

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Rick

- ✓ Experienced IDOT Consultant, CAG (the right people) – knows needs, cares
- ✓ Policy/Guidelines - all projects are different
- ✓ Flexibility is needed – no cookie cutter approach
- ✓ Find basic requirements for CSS
- ✓ More guidance required for who should be is PSG, CAG, TAG
- ✓ Consistent for all IDOT

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Matt

- ✓ Standardized scope/effort
- ✓ Consultant Training/PreQual
- ✓ Right people in CAG group
- ✓ CSS/NEPA timing and coordination
- ✓ Relationship between CSS and NEPA
- ✓ Standardization balance with flexibility
- ✓ Do individual Districts care at the same level
- ✓ Partnering with locals

Recommendation

- ✓ Sharing of experiences – not necessarily a manual with a goal of maintaining flexibility

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Brad

- ✓ Time frame – lose momentum (confusion on the “appropriate” amount.)
- ✓ Diversity is important, but can be tough, example: commuters.
- ✓ Schedule in the CAG, SIP... people get frustrated.
- ✓ New members – elected officials, in phase I members change.
- ✓ Review time IDOT “the Black Hole” Time frame.
- ✓ Scoping... scheduling, time frame...

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Eric

- ✓ Seems longer but doesn’t need to be
- ✓ Let public involvement drive the schedule
- ✓ Gauge personality of project
- ✓ Make sure project really needs done
- ✓ Need to have the right CAG members
- ✓ Not sure what consultant brings to table
- ✓ Concern over sub roles and knowledge

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Candace

- ✓ Pre-Qual - Non CSS person doing CSS and calling it CSS can leave a sour taste in the public’s mouth. This can lead to a bad CAG mix
- ✓ Senior Management buy in (buy in varies from District to District)
- ✓ Level of CSS required can vary
- ✓ CSS needs to cater to project specifically – NO standard
- ✓ Let District define scope
- ✓ Quantifying man-hours varies from District to District
- ✓ Conveying design criteria

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Doug

- ✓ Need a well defined scope
- ✓ CSS effort - fit project
- ✓ Need a flexible reassessment process
- ✓ CSS light

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Dave

- ✓ Guidelines are a double edge sword – can be good or bad
- ✓ Work on the consensus definition especially as it relates to “IDOT decides”
- ✓ Merger process deadlines driven by busy schedules
- ✓ Better guidelines or direction on meeting format
- ✓ Provide examples
- ✓ If we know what the problem is, why do we have to ask?

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Kathy

- ✓ Consistency – interpretation of process throughout districts
- ✓ Share process amongst districts – to understand broad concept of process that will lead to best practices

SESSION II CONSULTANT FEEDBACK Jon-Paul

- ✓ Improve contracting process when scope changes occur
- ✓ Supplementals – use work order type process
- ✓ Utilize seed/start-up hours for CSS projects
- ✓ CSS Manual – need more details in Chapter 15
- ✓ Selecting right CAG membership

SESSION III CAG/SIP/PSG

SESSION III CAG Sherry

Concerns:

- ✓ CAG is made up of Mayors / decision makers – by design.
- ✓ Keeping the CAG interested (if not a “sexy” project = no interest)
- ✓ Important of have “right” members, i.e. truly representative.
- ✓ Going out to CAG too early – corridor study
- ✓ Giving CAG false sense of power
- ✓ Good facilitation
- ✓ Too many corridors to study

Recommendations:

- ✓ Consultant must have trained facilitator on staff or (hire one) who is technically sound.
- ✓ Ask CAG to report at CAG meeting if they have talked to their interest group.
- ✓ Maybe CSS isn’t needed (for non “sexy” projects).
- ✓ Tell them “draw as many lines as you want, but we will only study three.”

SESSION III SIP Doug

- ✓ Example for EIS & EA link to approved SIPs to use as examples
- ✓ Group by District, project type, size, rural urban
- ✓ Process to update SIP
- ✓ Can be too detailed
- ✓ Need to streamline approval process
- ✓ Consistency in ground rules between Districts
- ✓ CAG – privacy issues (address, phone numbers, etc)

SESSION III CAG Candace

- ✓ The right CAG members do not have a hidden agenda
- ✓ CAG “How’s it going” rumor
- ✓ Effective versus Appropriate Representation (Identify groups)
- ✓ Keeping momentum mistrust from public
- ✓ Getting good diversity
- ✓ CAG members reporting back to group
- ✓ Picking City list – 1st PI meet representative and put name down then IDOT selects
- ✓ What is our responsibility (IDOT)?
- ✓ CAG allows venting – better to have it here
- ✓ Everyone has an agenda
- ✓ Number in CAG
- ✓ May have several CAGs
- ✓ Change message board to get motorist
- ✓ Emails can keep CAG engaged
- ✓ Newsletters
- ✓ Regular meetings – don’t leave them waiting
- ✓ Time and duration of meeting is announced
- ✓ Instead of number of years say number of meetings
- ✓ Know your audience – don’t dress up if you are in a casual area
- ✓ Consider asking CAG members to attend PI meeting as a worker

CAG Concerns

- ✓ Outside consultant brought up an issue – IDOT has already made decision. PG backs out. CAG asked them questions.
- ✓ Education leads to trust which leads to less rumors
- ✓ Look at milestones to determine the number of meetings
- ✓ Post meeting minutes on the web
- ✓ Most CSS projects should have a website (opposition groups will have them)

SESSION III CAG Dave

- ✓ How do we get the CAG to represent the stakeholders as a whole
- ✓ Explaining project constraints
- ✓ CAG members that actually represent the group they said they would and not their own interests
- ✓ Hard to get CAG members
- ✓ Hard to keep folks interested
- ✓ Manage expectations - watching consensus versus what IDOT needs
- ✓ More defined rolls
- ✓ What is the right size?
- ✓ Determine a leader

CAG Recommendations

- ✓ Have interest groups decide who should represent them on the CAG
- ✓ Members need to understand their commitment and their role
- ✓ Avoid asking politicians who should be on CAG – that makes it political
- ✓ Have a survey or “application” that explains why they would be good to represent a specific group
- ✓ Reach out to community and Public Works Officials – Consultants can really help to do this
- ✓ Schedule meetings at the “right” time – advanced schedule
- ✓ A dedicated person should be responsible for encouraging CAG members to keep up attendance.

SESSION III CAG/SIP/PSG

SESSION III SIP Jon-Paul

- ✓ Identify the “personality” of your stakeholders to tailor outreach
- ✓ Involve the users of the facility
- ✓ Manage those with pre-determined agendas from taking over
- ✓ Keep them involved throughout the process – commitment of stakeholders
- ✓ Scheduling – utilize stakeholder time during the “meat” of the study which is the problem identification and the alternative development
- ✓ Select stakeholders that represent the broader economical issues – match available funds with the project features
- ✓ Do more advanced work
- ✓ Timing of writing of SIP
- ✓ Advance outreach to identify potential stakeholders prior to SIP being written
- ✓ Determine how to best communicate with stakeholders during the process
- ✓ Need a strong facilitator
- ✓ Place more emphasis in SIP on one-on-one/individual meetings with stakeholders to identify problems, needs, solutions
- ✓ Define/explain why IDOT is the final decision maker without alienating the public
- ✓ The decision process includes stakeholder input and technical studies with IDOT acting as the final decision maker.

SESSION III CAG Eric

- ✓ Ensure good representation diversity
- ✓ Are CAG’s reporting back and forth with their groups
- ✓ Determine early in the process if you have the people you need
- ✓ How to bring in the local planning already in place
- ✓ Have to explain comp plans
- ✓ Make sure you have the local planner involved (not always our issue)
- ✓ Make sure all choices are heard
- ✓ Break them up – use assigned seating
- ✓ How to keep members engaged
- ✓ CAG for large area
- ✓ Pick themselves?
- ✓ How to select members for and manage the CAG
- ✓ What type of members – elected, etc.
- ✓ Make sub groups that report to the whole – elect, tech agg, enviro
- ✓ How do the CAG & PSG interact? They want to talk to Oz
- ✓ Add & adjust – keep looking

SESSION III SIP Kathy

- ✓ Illicit input and listen to it
- ✓ Use newsletters, websites, etc. – how, when, how many? They help to define the problem.
- ✓ Use CAG meetings effectively
- ✓ Other perspectives need to be heard
- ✓ Define purpose of project
- ✓ Bring the lions into the arena
- ✓ Buy in through peers
- ✓ This is already what we do during Phase I
- ✓ SIP is most critical element of the CSS Process
- ✓ There is a learning curve in developing SIP
- ✓ Clearing house of SIPs (i.e. share point site)
- ✓ Focused training on successful SIP
- ✓ Need to have the correct people on the SIP. Members should be able to:
 - Identify the scope of the project and understand it
 - Understand the technical processes including NEPA/404, CSS, PSG, Coordination
- ✓ Talk to people in the area including local officials and others who have influence
- ✓ Try to achieve consensus
- ✓ IDOT has final say because policy definition opens IDOT to criticism
- ✓ Clarify what consensus is early on
- ✓ As a side note: MYP language of scope of project tying IDOT’s hands when it is later determined to be a CSS project

SESSION III SIP Brad

- ✓ Good mix of stakeholders, watch out for “stacked deck” – sort into groups.
- ✓ Define stakeholder? Defined by the person.
- ✓ Length of time of project SIP... define how do you replace people.
- ✓ How to select the proper “representation” of the SIP. Mail / audit?
- ✓ Use SIP to redefine the Context Audit. Application to sit on the CAG selection within the SIP, develop need for application.

SESSION III CAG/SIP/PSG

SESSION III PSG Rick

- ✓ FHWA availability and participation
- ✓ Who is on the PSG? IDOT, FHWA, ???
- ✓ If same people in all groups,
 - Not creative
 - Foregone conclusions
- ✓ Having the right people, not job title
- ✓ Involve a more diverse group
- ✓ PSG is a tool to set up milestones and maintain a schedule
- ✓ NEPA requires flexibility of the PSG ‘
- ✓ The importance of time/schedule options vary by District
- ✓ IDOT needs to understand what the Consultant needs from the PSG
- ✓ The PSG Group is good
- ✓ Perform a dry run
- ✓ Streamline the process
- ✓ A coordination meeting may not be enough
- ✓ Flexibility is needed depending on what point you are in the process
- ✓ Regular coordination plus longer at NEP & Public Hearing process
- ✓ PSG Starts large and shrinks (variable size is desired, but must have key staff members)
- ✓ PSG must keep process moving
- ✓ Need to define key staff
- ✓ Key staff that must be there (i.e. Bridge Office for major bridge projects)
- ✓ Need to sell CSS benefits to improve participation

SESSION III PSG Matt

- ✓ CSS projects a part of bi-monthly coordination +/- (timing, scheduling)_
- ✓ More consistent representation
- ✓ PSG needs to maintain its” multi-disciplinary team” aspect
- ✓ Broad experience then shrinks as project progresses then back to broad
- ✓ MPO on CAG? PSG?
- ✓ Those with \$ on PSG
- ✓ Scoped determined in MYP/Planning (based on programming issues)
- ✓ Does not allow “CSS process” to work

SESSION IV CONTEXT / PROBLEM STATEMENT

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

Rick

- ✓ The problem statement can get too large
- ✓ Problem statement should be more concise/precise
- ✓ It is hard to find the “real” problem in the statement
- ✓ The approval of the problem statement is a consensus between PSG & stakeholders
- ✓ PSG must edit statement – that is part of their role
- ✓ CAG – everyone wants their issue in the problem statement, but that can cause us to lose the main issue
- ✓ The purpose and need do not necessarily line up with the problem statement. The PSG needs to make sure that they will line up.
- ✓ Denial of traffic problem (particularly future projects)
- ✓ Need to focus on solutions to the problems
- ✓ Don't resist change
- ✓ There are unrealistic expectations for Phase II.
- ✓ Phase II may need to redo items such as budget and local participation.
- ✓ Guidance is needed to determine when Phase II revisits Phase I or when Phase II can use Phase I tools.
- ✓ Local issues surface such as sanitary sewers, sidewalk replacement, paths, new Mayors
- ✓ Priorities change
- ✓ The problem statement is a reflection of a moment in time and can change through the phases
- ✓ IGA's

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

Susan

- ✓ CAG gets too specific, not big picture (intersection change vs capacity need). Facilitator to keep on task and develop statement.
- ✓ Public meeting => All issues
CAG => All issues
=>facilitator=>develop purpose and need (PS).
Turning over reins? Or inclusive?
- ✓ Took all concerns =>develop PS => CAG
CAG wordsmith every issue in region into Problem Statement including ones unrelated to project. Example: economic development, sustainability. (Need good facilitator, agenda with time allocations).
- ✓ Problem Statement (not Purpose and Need) – 4 or 5 categories to address. Safety, Mobility, Capacity, Economic Development, Environment.
- ✓ Try to include scope in P.S.
- ✓ Importance of good facilitator to keep CAG on task.
- ✓ Try to include community issues or exclude things they don't want to talk about.
- ✓ Broad enough and passes laugh test.
- ✓ Dry runs – brainstorm potential issues. Ensure facilitator knows where want to go.
- ✓ Problems with later ideas from people not in meeting.
- ✓ People who don't want project, blocking P.S.
- ✓ Facilitation is important. Guiding without leading/steering.
- ✓ P.S. can help define project.

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

Brad

- ✓ Concise and simple so public can understand.
- ✓ Problem statement is precursor to purpose and need. May help frame alternatives.
- ✓ Keep your focus around the P.S.
- ✓ Key words / phrases: safety, level of service, capacity issues, expected growth, pavement condition.
- ✓ P.S. is changeable, P&N isn't!

SESSION IV CONTEXT / PROBLEM STATEMENT

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

_____ Rick

- ✓ Priority not based on need
- ✓ Politically motivated projects
- ✓ CSS does not always lead where politician wanted the project to go
- ✓ IDOT staff is not comfortable with this situation.
- ✓ Build it and they will come or denial of the traffic projections
- ✓ Projects chosen by political geographic bounds
- ✓ CAG sees perceived safety issues. The crash data may not support.
- ✓ Different perceptions of congestion
- ✓ The problem statement is “perceived problems” and may conflict with real problems revealed through analysis.

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

_____ Jon-Paul

- ✓ Involve public input with the development of the technical analysis to determine where the public input & technical analysis align.
- ✓ Take universe of problems and apply techniques that prioritize them
- ✓ The problem statement serves as a mission statement for project direction
- ✓ This is the first opportunity for them to see that their input was heard

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

_____ Kathy

- ✓ How to define problem statement when potential project is political AND has 50 years of history. You accomplish this through the CAG process.
- ✓ Use an engaged and diverse group to develop the problem statement
- ✓ Is a problem statement the same as purpose & need? NO, there are some similarities, but they are not the same
- ✓ Context audit flushes issues
- ✓ CAG could believe same, but IDOT explains the difference – it could be determined that the problem was just a perceived problem
- ✓ Context audit should go to all – not just CAG
- ✓ The problem statement should address the primary problem & the secondary issues that you can only get from community
- ✓ The problem statement *could* be long and involved and address many problems (not just transportation issues)
- ✓ We should be focusing on transportation issues and not necessarily social contracts.
- ✓ We don't want to create or exacerbate existing problems
- ✓ Need to have a good facilitator
- ✓ If problem statement goes astray:
 - Go back to group (i.e. CAG) and explain why the issue might not address the problem statement
 - Be honest from the beginning
 - Rewrite the problem statement
 - Follow the Golden Rule
 - Issues may not be transportation problems. Problems could be law enforcement issues such as speeding

SESSION IV PROBLEM STATEMENT

_____ Kathy

- ✓ The problem statement requires a lot of discussion and refining. The CAG process allows for this to happen.
- ✓ It is important to stay focused on transportation problems and stay on task. The key to this is a good context audit.

SESSION IV CONTEXT

_____ Dave

- ✓ Questions in standard form are not clear
- ✓ One audit form for a wide audience and they each interpret difference
- ✓ Used basic form but revised a little to match project
- ✓ Provide sample audits
- ✓ Re-write to be project specific
- ✓ Find out what is important to stakeholders – make sure audit gets that
- ✓ Audit can't replace leg work needed
- ✓ Questions may need to be different for different people
- ✓ Use audit to help write problem statement (show that you are using audit results)
- ✓ Not an ISO BDE form
- ✓ Put out a .doc file so that people can edit
- ✓ Have to give audit at a meeting where you can explain it
- ✓ Can work on reaching a consensus on importance of context items (discuss results with survey takers)
- ✓ Get consensus on something not related to the project

SESSION IV CONTEXT / PROBLEM STATEMENT

SESSION IV CONTEXT

Eric

- ✓ Send to all
- ✓ Hard to get a form filled out and returned
- ✓ Multiple, reduce more discussion than survey
- ✓ Hard to fill out with rural/urban context
- ✓ Revise to fit area(s)
- ✓ Hard to rank importance with large survey but don't want to limit
- ✓ Form should start the discussion of context, not define it. It should set the focus in order to help efficiency.
- ✓ One tool to use to get data
- ✓ Results used to help in defining problems
- ✓ Tool to help eliminate or adjust alternatives
- ✓ Positive versus negative impacts
- ✓ Provides different perspectives for CAG members
- ✓ What is really first? Context or Problem Statement
- ✓ Add benefits and impacts
- ✓ Work with communities to narrow down focus of audit before circulating
- ✓ Sometimes just a piece of paper as CAG individuals move toward specifics

SESSION IV CONTEXT

Matt

- ✓ Ask good questions
- ✓ Stakeholders don't want to participate with context audit
- ✓ How do you interpret results and what do you do with the information?
- ✓ Don't ask "Yes/No" questions
- ✓ Modify audit to specific project
- ✓ If project goes against community "Context," it is important that the community understand why
- ✓ 2-3 public meetings and 6-8 CAG meetings
- ✓ Audit to all or just CAG?
- ✓ Develop guidelines (things to consider) on who should get audit
- ✓ Develop best practices

SESSION IV CONTEXT

Doug

- ✓ Context – alternative selection different
- ✓ Early in process
- ✓ Watch for people "stacking the deck"
- ✓ Tailor questions to project
- ✓ Prepare draft audit and CAG revised
- ✓ Summarize – bar chart
- ✓ Group/All – depend on project

SESSION IV CONTEXT

Candace

- ✓ There are different ways to find context
- ✓ Adapted form to get a more rural response
- ✓ Form can be changed – it has to be modified
- ✓ Mailed form before first meeting
- ✓ Emailed form to CAG members before first meeting so members could become familiar with the form
- ✓ Consultant filled out the form
- ✓ Reached a consensus on the form
- ✓ Now revisit the form because engineering results have changed their values
- ✓ Give form to ALL stakeholders at 1st PI meeting and also make it available online (or allow them to take form home and mail it back)
- ✓ Modify form
- ✓ Give to CAG to find out if they agree
- ✓ Community context survey (changed name)
- ✓ In one case, stakeholders were asked about transit (not originally in form)
- ✓ Create a display showing results of context form
- ✓ 5 key issues in form were used to develop the problem statement
- ✓ If values change, may need to go back to PI meeting
- ✓ Sometimes form doesn't add to the project (for Phase II) – example: bridge job
- ✓ Phase I for bridges – the form may assist in type of bridge, location, who are the users
- ✓ Schedule one on one interviews used as specific list
- ✓ Meet with elected officials first
- ✓ Con – may have a meeting turn into a public involvement meeting
- ✓ Releasing information early can start rumors
- ✓ Meet with 30 individual stakeholders before 1st PI meeting
- ✓ Meet a few (select) stakeholders before 1st PI meeting (elected officials)

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Sherry

- ✓ Project: IL 104, Meredosia Bridge, District 6
- ✓ Defining: used aerials and markers. Town didn't want bypassed. Four river crossing options with 17 different alignments.
- ✓ Eliminating: reviewed impact matrix with CAG. They chose option that IDOT would probably not have selected.
- ✓ "Aha" Surprised at what the CAG chose.

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Brad

- ✓ Urban project, District 2
- ✓ Divided into segments: residential, commercial, cemetery.
- ✓ Gave possible alternatives for each segment. Split the CAG, each group worked on two alternatives.
- ✓ Vote, do your homework on possible alternatives.

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Brad

- ✓ High Speed RR – City of Springfield
- ✓ Mass mailing for CAG
- ✓ Defend P.S. – four CAG groups with different interests.
- ✓ Work with CAG to define alternatives, before the public meeting.

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Rick

Corridor Study - Stacie

- ✓ 100 Routes on first attempt with 1 CAG
- ✓ We learned that it is better to begin with 40 more focused Routes
- ✓ Conduct consensus workshop in smaller groups of people with similar ideas
- ✓ PSG refines
- ✓ Public Hearing with the public and various agencies to define situation
- ✓ Talked about others being decision makers
- ✓ Cost, FHWA, NEPA
- ✓ 2 options in DEIS to agencies at upcoming NEPA meeting
- ✓ Public out, City added 2 more

Urban Right Angle Intersection - Ted

- ✓ Began with a discussion of environmental constraints, geometric constraints
- ✓ Use templates to show possible alternatives
- ✓ CSS? They are doing parts
- ✓ NEPA – IDOT is not the only decision maker

Stacie

- ✓ Which impacts can the community live with?
 - Wetlands
 - Homes
 - Businesses
- ✓ Political will – election timing

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Jon-Paul

Meredosia Bridge by Vinod Patel

- ✓ Generated alternatives from technical perspective (10)
- ✓ Workshop with CAG used the generated alternatives as a starting point
- ✓ CAG generated additional alternatives (14)
- ✓ Individual meetings with key stakeholders (RA's and Power Plant)
- ✓ Up to 15 alternatives
- ✓ CAG workshop – narrowed list down to 8 using comparative analysis (environmental/social impacts)
- ✓ CAG met without IDOT and developed a new alternative. The knowledge of the community helped define this alternative
- ✓ 9 to 3 workshop with NEPA/404

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Jon-Paul

Elgin/O'Hare – Larry Martin

- ✓ Inputs
 - P & IV
 - Environmental/Social constraints
 - Technical Analysis of existing system operations
 - Stakeholder input
- ✓ CAG/T.F. Workshop – maps and markers to define improvements
- ✓ IDOT/CH2M - packaged roadway/transit alternatives
- ✓ Alternatives were narrowed down at the CAG Workshop based on qualitative and quantitative analysis based on stakeholder input.
 - 5 alternatives were eliminated based on system performance
 - 3 alternatives were eliminated based on disproportionate impact
 - An evaluation criterion was developed based on performance, impacts, cost, and design feasibility. 5 more alternatives were eliminated.
 - DEIS

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Doug

Illinois 3 – Waterloo – Steve Donahue

- ✓ Policy
- ✓ Typical sections
- ✓ Impact of typical sections overlaid on an aerial photo
- ✓ CAG selected 2 -3 typical sections for further study
- ✓ Project broken into segments – select a typical segment

Illinois 159 – Collinsville – Don Hayden

- ✓ Same as previous – typical sections (policy)
- ✓ CAG select 2-3 to study further
- ✓ Project broken into segments – select a typical segment

US 51(Pana to Centralia) – Jerry Payonk

- ✓ 5 CAG groups – CAG each town along project route
- ✓ 1 Regional CAG
- ✓ 500' Corridors
- ✓ Opposition after NEPA
- ✓ Revisit

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Dave

- ✓ Have to start with the process – group must understand steps
- ✓ Must have a hand in developing
- ✓ Draw alignments on CADD at the meeting on an aerial (laptop/projector)
- ✓ Clearly define limiting factors
- ✓ May need stakeholders to help ID “local” factors we may not know about
- ✓ When to introduce cost into alternative analysis will vary by project – need to be careful not to undermine the process
- ✓ Divide larger projects into smaller pieces
- ✓ Divide interest groups between tables for smaller group discussions
- ✓ May divide by geographic areas
- ✓ Use technology (video) to visualize the alternatives
- ✓ Use scoring (points) to group better alternatives - a group of alternatives will rise above the rest – you are not scoring to pick a winner but to chose a group of alternatives
- ✓ Just letting people “see” what will happen if an alternative is built will help to eliminate some alternatives
- ✓ Jason Stringer discussed utilizing “live” CADD drawings as alternatives are presented.

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Eric

- ✓ Let them draw and talk amongst themselves – they start dropping
- ✓ Break into tables – have them draw up alternatives and then discuss the pros and cons of each
- ✓ Whatever alternatives are left after their discussion is analyzed by IDOT
- ✓ IDOT presents alignments and let CAG add or adjust
- ✓ It is actually more difficult on bridge type alternatives. You can’t always say OK at meeting.
- ✓ For bridge type projects, provide options you know are practical
- ✓ Use visuals!
- ✓ Add aesthetics with cost
- ✓ Try to use yes or no questions rather than “shades”
- ✓ Then get more and more specific with your questions

US 51

- ✓ Time frame is 4 years but this can’t be done on large projects – 4 months prior

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Candace

Cindy

- ✓ New alignment – CAG drew on some aerials – some constraints were given (environmental not geometric).
- ✓ This was done at each table
- ✓ 3 corridors were created at each of the 5 tables
- ✓ Therefore, 15 alternatives were generated plus the 1 that the District developed. FHWA required that all 16 alternatives be thoroughly investigated. Everyone wanted to make sure that all concerns were covered. It was time consuming

Bridgett

- ✓ 12 -15 of the original alternatives were narrowed down to 7-8. The 7-8 were thoroughly investigated and narrowed down to 2
- ✓ Money and eventually geometry analyzed
- ✓ There should be limitations on allowing the stakeholder to develop so many alternatives
- ✓ Combine ideas
- ✓ The department should have the option to tell stakeholders “we will not study this particular option” (example: widen existing facility – you may not want to look at a bypass)
- ✓ The department can give the CAG on alternatives (example: existing utility corridor may be a good place to have an alignment)
- ✓ IDOT is the final decision maker – Say A LOT
- ✓ Has anyone had a final alternative that a CAG didn’t like?
- ✓ Matrix was used for final alternative

Gary G.

- ✓ Avoid environmental issues
- ✓ In a CAG meeting, the Department developed several transparencies (full policy). The CAG was asked to narrow the alternatives down to 2 or 3

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Matt

- ✓ Inviting landscape architect to help public visualize design using renderings instead of plan style
- ✓ Give them a marker – not just CAG, but public
- ✓ Getting stakeholder to draw 1st line can be difficult
- ✓ As an individual, let them consider what they would like before letting them draw
- ✓ Let people identify issues at public meeting before drawing line segments on any project
- ✓ Being flexible on how alternatives are defined – educate first?
- ✓ Give CAG facts to help them eliminate (visual and graphic helps)
- ✓ Traffic modeling (simulation) to help describe ideas visually
- ✓ Educate what we look for during evaluation process
- ✓ “DOT-Method” to help eliminate
- ✓ Even if department does not like an alternative, it is still valid to be considered unless there is a fatal flaw

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Kathy

Karen Geldert – D8

- ✓ It was predetermined the we go from 2 to 4 lanes
- ✓ Sections of the roadway were presented to CAG
- ✓ The CAG reviewed the transparencies of elements of the proposed cross-section including the median, shoulders, and the bike path/shared use path
- ✓ The CAG (in small groups) selected the 2 options they liked the best
- ✓ 2-3 cross sections for each of the 3 portions resulted in 7-10 transported
- ✓ They chose 2 from each to bring forward resulting in 6 total

SESSION VI DEFINING / ELIMINATING ALTERNATIVES

Kathy

*Gil Jaynes – Howard Green Co.
(Discussion over a 26 Mile Corridor)*

- ✓ The Consultant gave a brief overview of engineering and environmental –instructional tools to CAG
- ✓ Uncomfortable for engineer
- ✓ In small groups (tables of 6), CAG members drew alignments on transparencies. Then each small group reported their options. Each table had more than one potential alignment and they ended up with 16 alignments
- ✓ They used a decision making matrix
- ✓ The alternatives were scored based on problem statement criteria, and how well they fulfilled the purpose and need
- ✓ They moved forward the alignments with the highest scores
- ✓ This brought the number of alignments down to 6

SESSION VII CSS / NEPA MERGER

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Sherry

- ✓ Recommendations: Get resource agencies involved early.
- ✓ Get FHWA buy-in on approach for your CSS project early.
- ✓ Tighten up the packet submittal deadlines on NEPA merger meetings.

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Brad

- ✓ Use the bi-monthly meetings can / may help streamline process to make what is presented at NEPA meeting approved.
- ✓ Use that phone or email to communicate.
- ✓ Include FHWA as a member in PSG and district environmental unit. Help streamline.

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Jon-Paul

- ✓ Schedule limited number of merger meetings (too few)
- ✓ Check sheet for information needed for NEPA/404 meetings
- ✓ Agencies need to be brought through CSS process just as the public may require additional meetings and should go to them.
- ✓ Should integrate environmental requirements into CAG process (e.g. NEPA 101) – may require agencies to be present
- ✓ Training for IDOT/Consultants on NEPA/404 process
- ✓ Agencies need to be comfortable with this
- ✓ CSS process screens similar alternatives therefore, the decision to select one is based on subtle differences

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Rick

- ✓ Districts don't do the process often so no routine or expertise
- ✓ Need expertise from FHWA, DE, & Field Engineers to know what to do
- ✓ FHWA wants corridors combined, but it is hard to define how
- ✓ Verify who/when the SIP requires review and approval
- ✓ SIPs are hard to get approved through FHWA & BDE. Some districts don't ask for SIP approval.
- ✓ If EIS, FHWA must approve SIP
- ✓ Time frame agreement for EA and EIS' must be coordinated with the SIP to make sure they line up.
- ✓ CSS is not a Federal requirement
- ✓ Everyone is busy and getting to SIP review takes time.
- ✓ Agencies act on first come, first serve
- ✓ Consultant should ask IDOT to call agencies like the Army Corps
- ✓ Protocol

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Kathy

- ✓ What is the drop dead date to provide NEPA packet? We should consider flexibility
- ✓ Need to set up website that automatically generates notification to all resource agencies at project startup (i.e. Archeology Database)
- ✓ Need to set up stand alone meetings with Resource Agencies outside of the NEPA/404 merger meetings on an as needed basis
- ✓ Adopt CSS documentation as part of EIS (eliminate duplication of work)

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Dave

- ✓ Identify constraints up front with stakeholders
- ✓ Make sure agencies know what is going on before you get to concurrence point
- ✓ Find ways to get past preference issues – working until we wear someone down may not be the best use of our time
- ✓ Identify major issues early
- ✓ Seems like we have to keep checking in to make sure prior decisions are still valid
- ✓ Policy versus preference
- ✓ Can CSS public involvement and 404 public involvement work together?

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Doug

- ✓ The schedule for NEPA meetings is good
- ✓ Larger meeting room
- ✓ Project update at NEPA meeting – time?
- ✓ Detail – concise presentations

SESSION VII CSS / NEPA MERGER

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Eric

- ✓ 4 years for EIS – FHWA goal
- ✓ 3 * 4 months = 1 year in down time minimum if you don't miss a meeting
- ✓ Schedule, Schedule, Schedule
- ✓ If you don't get concurrence, you don't have time to make next meeting
- ✓ What can we do to improve our submittals to reduce time to 4 months

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Candace

- ✓ No cold calls from consultant to any resource agency
- ✓ The department needs to be CC'd on all communications
- ✓ Communication should occur early and often
- ✓ Use all meetings to communicate (ask EPA to bi-monthly) or NEPA meetings
- ✓ If there's a key resource element, invite that agency to attend CAG meetings
- ✓ We all want to work with:
 - John Betker
 - Terry Savko
 - Matt Fuller

SESSION VII NEPA / CSS

Matt

- ✓ Willing to talk outside 404 merger meeting
- ✓ Ag prefers to see a fuller range of alternatives, not only preferred ones
- ✓ Concurrence outside 404 when agency cannot attend
- ✓ Agencies attend a field meeting early on
- ✓ Is there an opportunity to streamline review process or flexibility as process moves along
- ✓ An understanding of how resources (i.e. wetlands) are weighted

PEER EXCHANGE EVALUATIONS SUMMARY

Question #1:

Overall, did you find the peer exchange to be worthwhile and the sessions informative?

Yes	No
46	0

Comments:

- ✓ Very good opportunity for information exchange
- ✓ Being purely a Phase II engineer, I was able to obtain a better appreciation/understanding of the CSS process , which I had a training class for 2 days
- ✓ Informative
- ✓ Good mix of presentation & participation
- ✓ Seemed like there was a focus for part of the first day on what would make it easier for consultants. I don't disagree with enhancing our communication/coordination – those are needed things, but I felt some of the discussion leaned toward s their “needs.”
- ✓ Great exchange of personal stories and lessons learned
- ✓ Very useful exchange of ideas and procedure. It certainly was an innovative approach
- ✓ Liked the constant give and take although individual sections could may be have been shortened
- ✓ Just even if it was the discussions between the small table groups in how everyone is doing it differently and best practices – Great Conversation
- ✓ This was an excellent seminar. It is the first time that I've heard how other Districts apply CSS in depth.
- ✓ Great exchange of ideas and viewpoints
- ✓ I have only been involved with 1 CSS project. It was good to get a feel for what other Districts have done.
- ✓ Great idea!
- ✓ This was a great meeting and was very informative. It should be held every year or two.

Question #2:

Regarding the program sessions, which topic(s) did you enjoy or learn the most from? (Check all that apply)

Consultant Feedback	18
PSG/SIP/CAG	28
Facilitation of CSS Projects	13
Context/Problem Statement	20
Defining & Eliminating Alternatives	23
CSS/NEPA Merger	21
Policy Revisions	5

Question #3:

What topics would you like to see addressed in the future?

- ✓ Maintain a community of practice so CSS practitioners can exchange ideas/questions/best practices
- ✓ The transition of Phase I CSS to Phase II CSS. Shouldn't it be that CSS process is done in Phase I and majority of issues have already been resolved?
- ✓ Understanding the Department's concerns with Consultant's facilitation capabilities (i.e. what has the problem been?)
- ✓ Topics at meeting covered all aspects of the CSS process
- ✓ Identification of roles for IDOT/Consultant – some standardization for conducting CAG meetings
- ✓ Lessons learned on various projects, IDOTS perspective by District, tools for CSS such as technology use, websites, media, outreach techniques
- ✓ Case Studies – at least 2 or 3 with a case study aligned with a topic/subject
- ✓ Same
- ✓ Integration of CSS and NEPA/Merger processes
- ✓ Complete Streets
- ✓ How to relate Complete Street policy to CSS policy
- ✓ IDOT panel, a couple more consultants on panel, a project case study (lessons learned)
- ✓ ESR and schedule (would have fallen in with "CSS/NEPA Merger" section)
- ✓ More SIP development & CAG establishment
- ✓ CSS/NEPA Merger
- ✓ Defining & Eliminating Statement
- ✓ Facilitation
- ✓ I suggest a case study exercise that briefly takes the group through a completed project – problems could be introduced with alternative approaches, and the approach that was used'
- ✓ How does CSS merge with Complete Streets?
- ✓ Tailoring CSS to specific needs, i.e. – what to do when you already have a set alignment for a project and are bound by FHWA/IDOT policy (regarding interchange type)
- ✓ In my opinion, keep talking about the sessions since this is the meat and potatoes of CSS. Need to continue exchanging ideas on CSS

Additional Comments:

- ✓ Last exercise drug on too long
- ✓ There were plenty of strong personalities and very knowledgeable
- ✓ More training and exchange of information with other Districts needed
- ✓ I learned IDOT uses "sticky walls" at CAG meetings. I had never seen them before.
- ✓ Seemed a bit long. Makes it difficult having to travel during evening hours so would prefer classes that end at 12:00 or so to be able to accommodate travel
- ✓ Good forum for sharing information and hope information synthesis captures all ideas and discussion
- ✓ There were many people, but the cumulative knowledge base is beneficial

- ✓ Last session too deliberate, long, poorly facilitated
- ✓ Could possible reduce time would help in that starting at 9 am allows some Districts to drive in the morning rather than stay the night before
- ✓ I think we were lucky but have future meetings during the non-winter/holiday season
- ✓ The variety of IDOT District employees provided good base for discussion because of project types/sizes – differences
- ✓ I really enjoyed hearing from the various districts, consultants on similarities and difficulties in the stages of CSS implementation. It will be good to have consistency in CSS development/facilitation for all projects.
- ✓ Should have recorded recommendations throughout the session and posted them to wall so that the final recommendation session would have these visible for consideration for policy revisions
- ✓ I think all of us would benefit from such sessions – maybe yearly or alt years
- ✓ Great idea. If someone does CSS for first time in new District and outline CSS project first before you submit scope and hours
- ✓ I like how you focused on recommendations, not just stating the problem
- ✓ Thanks to all of you on the committee for your time and effort. It was clear that you had all put a lot of work into the planning and execution of this meeting. Please continue the effort! I think that we need to keep the dialogue going in order to improve our implementation of CSS! THANK YOU!
- ✓ It made it a little difficult to be honest about some things that didn't work when the consultants who led those efforts were in the room. However, I understand why they needed to be here – so I don't have a recommendation for change, but just wanted to share the thought.
- ✓ A longer time could be filled, but may be too long of a commitment for people to attend.
- ✓ Didn't think the recap was too helpful for this group and each time it was done took too much time. CSS/NEPA merger panel spent too much time on prepared questions. Questions from audience better. Policy revisions section was good idea, but slow paced.
- ✓ The first morning session felt a bit rushed, particularly the consultants feedback position. I felt more time was needed for this discussion.
- ✓ We needed to have participation from IDOT-BDE Environment unit
- ✓ Great job! It was really useful to hear what folks are struggling with across the state and how they are handling the challenges
- ✓ Surprised no one from Barbara Steven's office was here. Policy revisions part dragged on a bit.
- ✓ Time well spent. Thanks
- ✓ Great work by IDOT!!!
- ✓ Well managed & timed
- ✓ Good diverse group
- ✓ The approach is outstanding. Sharing of experience signals success.
- ✓ Good to hear how CSS is working for others and methods used
- ✓ Found the Peer Exchange to be informative for both the experienced and less experienced; more valuable than a series of lectures. Gave a good overview of problem areas others have experienced and methods/ideas to avoid those pitfalls. Heard that some tables were mainly populated with inexperienced people with no input.

- ✓ This was an excellent class. Learned that the process can be altered. Good meeting. Hope to have more classes or meetings to make it consistent throughout the Districts.
- ✓ Great 2 days!
- ✓ Being able to have a lunch type buffet during our peer exchange. I think we lose a lot of togetherness by splitting up for 1 ½ hours for lunch
- ✓ Great to hear so much feedback among groups
- ✓ I would like to try to squeeze some time in to have anyone getting up sharing with the group and experience or situation. A show and tell type time with the whole group.
- ✓ Very good conference for helping to share experience with CSS
- ✓ I have learned from this conference. Keep up the good and hard work. I think that CSS is a good process.
- ✓ There seemed to be a lot of discussion/desire for an outside facilitator (non-tech), or someone with no stake in the project to facilitate CSS projects. However, a well trained technical person is needed for most of the process
- ✓ There was a lot to cover – my preference would have been 2 half days – I am pulled in too many directions. A suggestion for future sessions – assign “homework” in advance of seminar – i.e., “how did you develop evaluation alternatives”
- ✓ Overall, a great job. The right people were invited
- ✓ Great opportunity to share CSS activities on real projects. Thanks to the facilitators that worked to put together a program with the ability to share information on all CSS activities
- ✓ It seemed well prepared and thought out. Other than issues with microphones and feedback. It is just hard to find time for 2 days in a busy schedule, but I feel it has been worthwhile.
- ✓ This is an excellent exercise. Compliments to IDOT in developing this peer exchange.
- ✓ This was one of the most well-organized peer exchanges/classes I have attended at IDOT
- ✓ The last day should end by noon. If possible, have during summer or spring.
- ✓ It was a good mix of consultants, IDOT and regulatory agencies. Makes for excellent conversations in exchanging ideas of CSS
- ✓ CSS has come a long way since 2003 and all involved should be proud of what has been accomplished. Keep up the good job.

PEER EXCHANGE PRE-ATTENDANCE SURVEY

Prior to attending the Peer Exchange all invited attendees were asked to take a SharePoint based survey.

There were 56 total responses to the survey

1) Affiliation

- 59% of the responses were from IDOT Districts, 29% were from consultants. IDOT Central Office, Resource Agencies and FHWA made up the balance

2) How many years have you been actively involved in the transportation industry?

- None of the respondents had less than 5 years of experience
- 79% had more than 15 years experience
- 43% of the District respondents had more than 20 years of experience, 63% of the consultants had more than 20 years of experience

3) Do you consider yourself to be:

- 53% identified themselves as Project Engineers/Managers
- 20% said they were Principals/Bureau Chiefs

4) What is your professional background?

- 80% are Engineers, 11% have an Environmental Science background
- 88% of the Districts respondents are Engineers, 75% of the Consultants are Engineers

5) What CSS training have you had?

- 82% have attended the two day CSS Approach class (88% from the Districts, 81% of the Consultants)
- 52% have had two or more CSS training classes

6) How many CSS projects have you been involved with?

- 5 respondents have not been involved in any CSS projects (3 from the Districts, 2 from Central Office)
- 30% have been involved in 4 or more CSS projects (15% of District responses, 50% of the Consultants)

7) During public involvement/stakeholder meetings, I normally...

- 77% answer questions during open house style meetings
- 5 have not been involved with the public involvement process, but not the same 5 that indicated they have not been involved with any CSS projects (Q6)
- 100% of the consultants answer questions during open house style meetings, 94% make the presentation, and 88% facilitate
- 82% of the District respondents answer questions during open house style meetings, but only 27% make the presentation, and only 24% facilitate

8) If you have a question regarding CSS who do you talk to first?

- 80% contact someone in the responsible District, 14% contact someone in the Central Office

- 9) The people I work with at IDOT are...
- 59% said that they “seem OK with CSS, but only use it when they have to”
 - 38% of the consultants felt the people they work with at IDOT are advocates for CSS, only 27% of the district staff felt that way
 - 3 of the 4 people who said that the people they work with at IDOT are “looking for ways to avoid CSS” said that CSS should be used on more projects (Q10)
- 10) Do you think IDOT should use CSS on...
- 61% said the same number of projects, 27% more projects, and 12% fewer projects
- 11) The Resource Agencies (EPA, Corps of Engineers, etc)...
- This question had the widest variation in responses
 - 27% said that they had not worked with the resource agencies enough to answer
 - 80% of the respondents who said the resource agencies “don’t seem to be aware of, or care that IDOT is doing CSS” are from the Districts
- 12) IDOT's CSS policy...
- 77% said the policy allows them to adapt a CSS program that meets their needs
- 13) Rate the following tasks based on difficulty where 5 is hard or complicated and 1 is easy...
- Reaching consensus with the stakeholders was considered the most difficult task
 - Selecting members of the PSG and determining if CSS should be used were the easiest.
 - Consultants felt selecting members of the CAG was more difficult than those from the Districts
 - Districts felt preparing the SIP was more difficult than the consultants
 - Generally those with less CSS experience (respondents who indicated they have been involved in 1 or no CSS projects) felt the tasks were harder than those with more experience. The primary exception was reaching consensus with stakeholders which respondents who have been involved with 2 or more CSS projects rated more difficult than those with less experience.
 - Respondents with more experience felt that determining which projects should use CSS was considerably easier than those with less experience (an average of 2.8 vs. 2.0)
- 14) Rate the usefulness of the following components of the stakeholder involvement plan where 5 is very helpful and 1 is a waste of time...
- Ground rules for stakeholder involvement were identified as being the most helpful
 - Listing members of the PSG was the least useful with an average of 3.4. The relatively high average seems to indicate that all the listed components of the SIP are beneficial.
 - Consultants gave almost all the components of the SIP higher ratings than the Districts (they felt they were more helpful)
 - Ground rules for stakeholder involvement was rated considerably higher by consultants than the Districts
 - Respondents with more CSS experience rated all the listed SIP components and more helpful than those with less experience

15) The context audit should...

- 54% thought the context audit should be given to a representative group of stakeholders while 37% thought it should be given to all stakeholders

16) When the Department first started using CSS the following items were identified as possible concerns. Rate the concerns as you see them now with 5 being a big concern and 1 being no concern...

- Overall, increased consultant costs, lack of experience, and CSS taking longer were identified as the biggest concerns
- Granting too many design exceptions was the lowest concern
- Respondents from the Districts considered every category to be more of a concern than the consultants.
- District and consultant responses varied considerably. The responses for CSS taking longer and increased consultant costs were significant (a significant difference was defined as the average for one group being at or outside one standard deviation for the other group).
- Consultants rated increased consultant costs at an average of 2.6 while District respondents gave it a 4.1
- Consultants rated CSS taking longer at an average of 2.8, the Districts at 3.9
- Respondents with less CSS experience rated each item as more of a concern than those with more experience. The largest differences were for “CSS forces us to spend more time on peoples’ feelings” (averages of 3.2 vs. 2.6) and “IDOT ends up spending limited resources on enhancements” (averages of 3.4 vs. 2.6)

17) The following have been identified as potential benefits of CSS. Rate the following as you see them where 5 is very beneficial and 1 is not beneficial...

- CSS allowing projects to get to construction quicker was clearly identified as the least beneficial. Given the low rating (2.5) most people probably did not feel it was a benefit at all as indicated by the high responses to CSS takes longer in Question 16.
- Again District and consultant responses varied considerably. The responses for CSS provides a project that fits within the context of a community and CSS documents stakeholder involvement were significant.
- Consultants rated every benefit higher, or more beneficial, than the Districts
- Respondents with more CSS experience considered each item to more beneficial than those with less CSS experience except for CSS allows projects to get to construction quicker; which had an average of 2.5 regardless of experience

PEER EXCHANGE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



Front Row Left to Right: Susan Stitt, Judy Weddle, Candace Saueremann, Sherry Phillips, Kathy McNeill, Gwen Montgomery, Lois Corley, Lori Ward. Back Row: Matt Hirtzel, Jon-Paul Kohler, Rick Wanner, Dave Speicher, Eric Therkildsen, Doug Keirn, Dennis Jennings, and Brad Risinger.