

NCHRP 20-7
Proposed Research Needs Statement

Subcommittee on Right of Way, Utilities, and Outdoor Advertising Control
July 18, 2014

TITLE

Utility Coordination Best Practices for Design-Build and Alternative Contracting Projects

BACKGROUND / NEEDS STATEMENT

Traditional Design-Bid-Build contracting continues to be the most common means of project development and delivery for public transportation construction projects. There has been a marked increase in the use of alternative contracting methods amongst state transportation departments.

Alternative contracting methods such as the Design-Build, Cost Plus Time, Lane Rental, and the Construction Management/General Contractor (CM/GC) process are being used more often for varied reasons such as; expediting project execution, fostering innovation, minimizing impacts to traffic flow, and better development to delivery coordination. There are many publications and research efforts aimed to select the appropriate method and define the means of execution when using these alternative methods. The utility coordination process is an element of both project development and delivery, and can be fundamentally influenced by the contracting process used. Despite the impact, minimal research exists defining the impacts to utility coordination and recommended best practices for incorporating utility coordination into the alternative methods.

The purpose of this research is to recommend identify impacted elements of utility coordination and define “best practices” when using alternative contracting methods on public transportation projects.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Identify best practices for the execution of utility coordination on various types of alternative contracting projects. These best practices should provide specific task assignments of responsibility based upon the type of procurement and means of project execution.

WORK TASKS

Tasks anticipated in this project include the following:

- Identify elements of utility coordination that may be impacted by alternative procurement projects. Focus best practice data gathering on these elements.
- Identify current alternative contracting processes.
- Survey all states and follow up with personal contact to identify and document the following:
 - 1) What alternative contracting project types have been used;
 - 2) How these types impacted assignments of utility coordination tasks;
 - 3) How these types impacted the utility coordination process;
 - 4) How these types impacted the proposal and selection process; and
 - 5) What were the successes and challenges?
- Identify states that have progressive bid procedures and focus further data gathering efforts.
- Identify similarities and differences among state approaches.
- Identify issues that need further attention.

- Write and publish a best practices guide, identifying recommended utility coordination methods based upon the elements identified in bullet one and alternative bid processes identified in bullet two.

URGENCY

Many states are utilizing alternative contracting methods or are considering using them in the near future. The research will better inform state transportation departments of the impacts to utility coordination as a whole and help guide projects to best practice utility coordination tailored to the procurement used. As we grow to use alternative procurement more and more often this is an urgent need to collect and share successful experiences among all of the states.

FUNDING REQUESTED AND TIME REQUIRED

It is estimated that this research will take 12 months to complete and will require \$100,000.

CONTACT PERSONS

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