INTRODUCTION
&
PROCESS OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

As permitted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Ohio Department of
Transportation (ODOT) may allow a Local Public Agency (LPA) to perform work on a Federal-
aid project as long as certain FHWA established conditions\(^1\) and ODOT established conditions
are met. These conditions include the following:

1. All Federal requirements must be met.
2. The LPA must be adequately staffed and suitably equipped to undertake and satisfactorily
complete the work.
3. The LPA must successfully complete all 12 eLearning training modules.
4. The LPA must provide a full-time employee to be in responsible charge of the project; and
5. The LPA has completed and submitted the LPA Local-Let Participation Requirement
Review Form to their respective ODOT district office.

This manual has been developed to aid the LPA in project development and administration, and
to provide an operating procedure for statewide consistency by both ODOT and the LPA. Where
applicable, manual chapters include process flow charts and a list of ODOT and LPA Primary
Roles & Responsibilities. Please note the process described in this manual are meant to cover the
majority of LPA Local-let projects. Not every nuance or special circumstance is provided for.
This is a ‘living’ document as it will be revised on a continuing basis from the feedback received
from both ODOT personnel and LPAs. Please refer to the ODOT website at
www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/LocalPrograms/pages/default.aspx for the most recent
version of this material and other information pertinent to the LPA Local-let process.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

This section provides a broad overview of the entire LPA Local-let process from project inception to completion. Each of the following chapters provide greater detail for the individual parts of the process.

**Project Initiation**

Typically, a project is identified through planning studies conducted by ODOT, the LPA or the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Through working with stakeholders, a problem is identified and defined, and clarification is made on what is to be improved. In the long-range planning process, individual projects are identified and prioritized for funding within established financial constraints. For local projects within MPO boundaries this would be the MPO Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) which becomes part of the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). Once a project is programmed, it is included in the STIP.

The ODOT District and the LPA receive a funding approval letter/e-mail from the Program Manager. (Project Development & Design Chapter)

**Programming Package**

The ODOT District LPA Manager supplies the LPA with a programming package which the LPA then completes. This is necessary to get the project entered into ODOT’s project management system called Ellis. (Project Development & Design Chapter)

**Field Review & Scope Dev.**

When the LPA Manager receives the completed, proposed Project Scope form, a field review is scheduled which includes district and LPA multidisciplinary personnel (Planning, Right of Way, Environmental, Construction, etc.) (Project Development & Design Chapter)

**LPA Qualification Review**

Each district is responsible for determining the LPA’s credentials in accordance with the Participation Requirements chapter.
LPA Agreement

After the project has been entered into ODOT’s Ellis System and assigned a PID number, the LPA Manager prepares and sends the LPA Agreement to the LPA. After signatures are obtained from the LPA’s legal Signing Authority, all copies are returned to the LPA Manager. It is the Manager’s responsibility to fully execute the Agreement and distribute it accordingly. (Project Development & Design Chapter)

NOTE: the sequence of the field review and scope development, submission and review of the LPA participation requirements, and the LPA Local-let agreement may not necessarily follow this order.

Consultants

The LPA may engage a consultant to perform architectural, engineering, environmental, right-of-way, and related services needed to develop and deliver a Federal-aid project. The LPA’s selected consultant must be ODOT prequalified, and selected according to a Quality Based Selection (QBS) process. ODOT’s Office of Consultant Services provides oversight in the announcement of available contracts on ODOT’s website, fee analysis and negotiation, and preparation of the LPA / Consultant agreement (Consultant Contract Administration Chapter)

Environmental

The LPA conducts any required public involvement activities, and prepares all required documents, reports and other necessary supporting materials for adherence to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and related Federal, State and Local regulations. Documents must be prepared by ODOT pre-qualified professionals who are selected through QBS. ODOT is responsible for the review of all such documents and coordination of these documents with Federal and State
regulatory agencies. The NEPA document must be completed and approved prior to the submission of the Plans, Specifications & Estimate package (PS&E). At that time, final plans will be reviewed for conformity with the previously approved environmental document(s). The LPA is responsible for obtaining all permits necessary for the project, including any local government construction permits. (Environmental Chapter)

**Right-of-Way**

All right-of-way acquisition and relocation assistance activities shall be performed by ODOT pre-qualified real estate professionals and in accordance with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 and Amendments (The Uniform Act), any related Federal regulations issued by FHWA, and State policies and procedures issued by ODOT. The LPA provides ODOT with a right-of-way certification letter. ODOT makes use of the LPA’s right-of-way certification, as well as evaluates the LPA’s performance of right-of-way activities under Titles II and III of the Uniform Act, and certifies compliance to FHWA. (Right of Way Chapter)

**Utilities**

The LPA performs utility relocation activities in compliance with 23 CFR Part 645 and the ODOT Utilities Manual, and provides certification that utility facilities have been appropriately relocated or accounted for so as not to interfere with construction activities. (Utilities Chapter)

**Railroads Coordination**

The LPA provides information to the LPA Manager concerning coordination with any railroad within the project limits, and is responsible for preparing the railroad agreement. (Railroad Coordination Chapter)
Design

Projects must be designed in accordance with formally adopted local design standards; otherwise the LPA must use standards as provided in the ODOT Location and Design Manual (L&D) or standards contained in the appropriate American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials’ (AASHTO) publication. (Project Development & Design Chapter)

PS&E Package

The PS&E package includes all items necessary to obtain Federal Authorization to advertise for bids. The district reviews the package and makes sure it is complete before submitting it to ODOT’s Central Office (Office of Local Programs). Once it is received in Central Office, Federal authorization is issued in approximately nine (10) days. Upon receipt of Federal Authorization, provided to the LPA through the District LPA Manager, the LPA can advertise the project. Advertising prior to receiving authority will result in the loss of Federal funds. (Advertising, Sale & Award Chapter)

Advertisement

Once the LPA receives the Federal Authorization, the LPA may begin advertising activities. Federal-aid projects are required to be advertised for a minimum of twenty-one (21) consecutive days between the first legal advertising date and the bid opening. Advertisements must be in accordance with Federal and local requirements, but should they differ, the Federal requirements prevail. Any addendum issued during the advertisement period must first be approved by ODOT for project eligibility. (Advertising, Sale & Award Chapter)
Pre-Award Meeting

This meeting is held by the LPA and ODOT any time after the submission of the PS&E package and preferably before advertising. The purpose of this meeting is to confirm construction contract administrations roles, responsibilities, and processes. This meeting is optional but is encouraged for more complex projects. (Construction Contract Administration)

Award Contract

After project bids are opened, the LPA prepares a bid tab to include a summary of all bidders and bid amounts, and analyzes the bids for responsiveness and errors. The analysis must result in a contract award to the lowest and best bidder also prequalified by ODOT. (Advertising, Sale & Award Chapter)

Award

The LPA awards the project construction contract in accordance with laws and policies governing the LPA by either resolution or ordinance, and enters into a contract with the awarded contractor. The LPA must notify the LPA Manager of the project award within thirty (30) days, and include necessary documentation. (See Advertising, Sale & Award Chapter.)

Preconstruction Meeting

This meeting, attended by district, LPA personnel, and the contractor, is for a discussion of the details on constructing the project, bid proposal, specifications, plans, method of payment, and the contractor’s progress schedule. The LPA Manager or representative will explain nondiscrimination issues as they pertain to the project, reinforce Federal Contract provisions, and discuss ODOT’s role in the periodic inspection process. Also, the funds reimbursement procedure and invoicing process will be explained. (Construction Contract Administration)
Final Inspection

Upon the completion of construction, the LPA notifies the district construction office to secure its participation in final inspection and acceptance of the project from the contractor. **This inspection must be performed prior to ODOT releasing the final payment.** ODOT Construction personnel field reviews the project for Final Inspection to ensure the project has been completed in conformity with the approved plans and scope of the project. (Construction Contract Administration)

LPA, Consultant & Project Evaluation

The district office will conduct a Final Project Administration **Project Evaluation Review** which will provide for a formal evaluation of the LPA and its consultant(s), which shall be used to determine an LPA’s ability to do future Local-let projects. (LPA Participation Requirements & Consultant Contract Administration chapters)

Quality Assurance Reviews

ODOT’s Central Office will conduct reviews of all districts every three years to ensure that all required processes have been adequately followed. These QARs will include a review of the districts’ processes and documentation of individual projects. In addition, QARs may be conducted randomly of LPAs in conjunction with the appropriate district office. (LPA Participation Requirements chapter)