



NCDOT NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Preconstruction Workshop

Questions & Answers from General Sessions I and II

January 2022

Project Management

Q1. When is the PM training?

A1. *At this time, NCDOT is solidifying the basic principles and role of a Project Manager within the organization. With that, we are evaluating options for Project Management Training. We do not have specific dates at this time; however, updates on this training will be provided in the IPD newsletter, during NCDOT PM monthly meetings, and on the [Project Management Connect Site](#).*

Q2. Before you receive the "Project Manager" title, what skills should you be developing?

A2. *Effective communication, critical thinking & problem solving, schedule & budget management, risk management, leadership, and conflict resolution. In addition, obtaining a broad understanding (as much as possible) of the transportation project development process (Project Delivery Network) and the associated technical disciplines would be desirable as well.*

Q3. Can you speak to the difference between project management within NCDOT versus project management by PEFs. Do you see them differently?

A3. *NCDOT Project Managers are ultimately responsible for managing scope, schedule, budget, quality, and risk. Examples of these responsibilities include (this is not an all-inclusive list):*

- *Identifying the work to be performed in-house or by a PEF*
- *Providing direction to the PEF PM and in-house staff and overseeing the PEF's efforts*
- *Ensuring the Division Engineer (or designee) is informed of significant issues and high risks*
- *Ensuring goals, objectives, and messaging is clear*
- *Ensuring timely decisions are made. Engaging with the production firm and technical disciplines to resolve issues on a project (or even programmatically within NCDOT)*
- *Proactively ensuring the team is on track to delivery products/project on time*
- *Reviewing the MS Project Schedule and ensure it aligns with project objectives; thinking ahead, what is coming up (look out 2wks, 2mos, 6mos and beyond) - are we on track and are we planning accordingly*
- *Requesting funds*
- *Approving changes to scope, schedule, or budget modifications; identifying and managing potential risks; ensuring quality control and quality assurance efforts are being completed*

PEF Project Managers are responsible for supporting the NCDOT PM. Examples of these responsibilities include (this is not an all-inclusive list):

- *Making the NCDOT PM's life easy! NCDOT PMs are managing a large portfolio of various types of projects*
- *Ensuring the NCDOT PM is informed of significant or out of scope issues and high risks*
- *Ensuring goals, objectives and messaging is clear*
- *Ensuring timely decisions are made. Leading the consultant team (primes and subs)*

- *Proactively ensuring the team is on track to deliver products/project on time*
- *Developing and maintaining the MS Project Schedule (at a minimum of once a month) and ensuring the entire team has the latest approved version.*
- *Reviewing the MS Project Schedule and ensure it aligns with project objectives; thinking ahead, what is coming up (look out 2wks, 2mos, 6mos and beyond) - are we on track and are we planning accordingly*
- *Ensuring the consultant team is fulfilling activities and tasks outlined in their scope of service on time and on budget (PEF costs and overall project cost)*
- *Identifying and managing potential risks; ensuring quality control efforts are being completed*
- *Having a strong partnership with the NCDOT PM*

Q4. Can a Project Manager double as a discipline lead, or does NCDOT prefer not to do this?

A4. *This is not the approach at NCDOT; however, externally a PM can double as a discipline lead. For example, firms with Planning Leads can act as the Project Manager. However, it should be noted if this is approved by the NCDOT PM, the PEF PM needs to ensure they are actively managing the project and team and not getting pulled into the details of production.*

Q5. Has NCDOT considered creating a prequalification for consultant Project Managers—primarily those functioning in a GEC capacity?

A5. *At this time, NCDOT does not anticipate a prequalification discipline code required for consultant Project Managers; however, this may change in the future as NCDOT determines the direction on NCDOT PM Training requirements.*

Q6. How do you ensure the communication between PMs and Division staff? Who has the accountability?

A6. ***Everyone is responsible for ensuring communication between all team members is occurring so there are no surprises.** The Division Engineer is ultimately responsible for the project, and the NCDOT PM is responsible to lead the team to deliver the project on behalf of the Division Engineer. The NCDOT Project Manager is held accountable for the level of communication occurring or not occurring. The PEF PM is responsible for supporting the NCDOT PM in this effort.*

Scopes & Manday Estimates

Q7. What is the time frame for standardized scopes?

A7. *Spring, 2022*

Q8. Will there be a IPD kitchen sink for fee estimation to go with the updated standardized scope?

A8. *Yes, NCDOT is working on updating the manday estimate to align with standardized scopes of service and the Project Delivery Network.*

Q9. "Scope creep" has been mentioned a lot. Can you define it? Does it include features a resource agency may bring up? Describe how we can better coordinate with stakeholders on improvement requests that come in during scoping when the project team has limited information.

A9. *"Scope creep" is continuous or uncontrolled changes to the project scope beyond what was originally programmed in the STIP or contracted with the firm. During scoping and throughout the project, it is essential to engage external project stakeholders early and often both to understand their needs and concerns as well as to provide transparency on the project's purpose and need (or goals and objectives), budget and schedule constraints, and any other limiting factors.*

Q10. With the increased focus on PM duties, how should that time be captured when creating budgets? Will NCDOT pay for project management in the standardized scope and manday estimate as the percentage of the overall fee?

A10. *Yes, Project Management will be paid for. It will not be a percentage of the overall fee. It will be scoped as an activity based on the tasks that will be performed and the complexity of the project. As a reminder, the Project Manager is required to frequently coordinate with all disciplines on the team.*

Q11. IPD & the PDN, as well as the directions from this workshop, imply a significant amount of additional time for communication, coordination, and follow up. Are the technical services group and other business units anticipating additional fee to properly execute the PDN?

A11. *Communication and coordination are not new concepts and should already be occurring on projects. The PDN is merely documenting, formalizing, and emphasizing the importance of this need. In addition, poor communication and coordination costs money and wastes time; so, projects that increase communication and coordination should see a decrease in project costs and a reduction in project delays. With the added focus on these concepts, PEFs should collaborate with their PM or technical units to confirm the needs for the specific assignments.*

Scheduling

Q12. How can a Project Manager enact schedule as the PEFs are in the process of updating it to PDN standards?

A12. *The Project Delivery Network (PDN) is not a standard, rather it is a roadmap of activities the team may need to take to deliver a project. The PDN does not state that all these activities must occur for all projects. The team is responsible for selecting the necessary activities to deliver the project, based on the project goals, objectives, and context. As schedules are being updated to mirror PDN activities, modifications to the critical path should be discussed with the NCDOT PM. In addition, the NCDOT PM should be informed about non-critical path modifications.*

Q13. Do you plan to create MS Project templates for various types of projects?

A13. *Currently we are not planning on creating templates for various project types. We are encouraging teams to tailor project schedules to the needs of the project. We are in the process of evaluating training needs for schedule management. Should templates still be desired and deemed valuable, we will consider developing some.*

Q14. Is StaRS scheduling still being used on central projects?

A14. *No, it should not be. MS Project is the day-to-day scheduling tool NCDOT expects to be used for projects, with major milestones being entered into SAP by the NCDOT PM.*

Project Delivery Network

Q15. We're in the middle of a project. Does it have to follow the PDN?

A15. *Please consult with your NCDOT Project Manager as to whether it makes sense to transition to the PDN or not. Projects that have not reached Right-of-Way Plans Complete (RPC), can likely effectively transition to the PDN. Projects that are further in design (beyond RPC) may find it more efficient to continue using the previous delivery process. However, each project is different and what makes sense for one may not for another, so please check with your NCDOT PM.*

Q16. Is there any document to show how the old project processes (Roadway Plan stages for instance) align with the PDN?

A16. *Not at this time. NCDOT will consider building a crosswalk to show how the old process aligns with the PDN.*

Other/Miscellaneous

Q17. Will there be an effort to expedite projects similar to 2017-2018? Will the new expectation be faster paced design?

A17. *With the many changes to project delivery processes, the creation of the role of PM, and the expectation of MS Projects for all projects, etc. NCDOT expects efficient, effective, and discipline-integrated project delivery. We will continue to push projects through the project development process, in accordance with the PE, ROW and Utilities spend plans. At this time, there are no anticipations that the program will be accelerated.*

Q18. Is detail information available for PE, ROW, and Utility budgets?

A18. *Yes - PE, ROW, and utility information is available through your Project Manager.*

Q19. Which is the most favorable contractual method that NCDOT prefers?

A19. As documented in the *NCDOT Preconstruction Finance Guide*, the type of contractual method used is dependent on what is known about a project or assignment.

Cost Plus Contracts should be used when:

- a) *The general magnitude of services is known, but the scope of services cannot be clearly defined*
- b) *Specific services are required rather than tangible deliverables*
- c) *The timing and duration of services cannot be reasonably foreseen*

Lump Sum Contracts should be used when:

- a) *The scope of service can be clearly defined*
- b) *A list of specific, tangible deliverables can be clearly defined*
- c) *The effort (number of hours) required to produce each deliverable can be reasonably estimated based on known facts.*

Q20. How should questions and comments on IPD be submitted?

A20. Any IPD comments or recommendations can be sent via the comment form at:

<https://connect.ncdot.gov/projects/Integrated-Project-Delivery/Pages/PDNComment.aspx>