Presentation topics

- Methods for working more effectively with communities
  - TH 36 Partnership Study
  - IECR Stakeholder Resolution process
- What’s the best starting point – community objectives or transportation objectives?

Understanding the St. Croix project context

- Transportation context
- Natural resources context
- Cultural resources context
- Community context
St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroi

Transportation Context
- Minnesota TH 36 / Wisconsin STH 64
- MN Medium priority Inter Regional Corridor
- WI Corridors 2020
- NHS
- Navigable waters

Natural Resources Context
- Nationally designated Wild and Scenic River
- Protected species

Cultural Resources Context
- Numerous cultural resources
Community Context

- Perceived edge of Metro area
- Tourism area
- Pride in community character

Mn/DOT Context Sensitive Design Principles

1. Balance safety, mobility, community and environmental goals in all projects.
2. Involve the public and affected agencies early and continuously.
3. Address all modes of travel.
4. Apply flexibility inherent in design standards.
5. Use an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs.
6. Incorporate aesthetics as an integral part of good design.

Community and Environmental goals

- How are they identified?
- How can we develop an understanding of these goals?
- How do we evaluate alternatives against these goals?
- How do they play a role in decision-making?
TH 36 Partnership Study

Mn/DOT approach to corridor studies – Introduction

• Conventionally, work through technical and policy committees
• Work in Partnership
• Tailor process to Partners’ Needs
• Involve key stakeholders
• Find Common Ground

Study Process

• Study Partners
• Policy Advisory Committee:
  - 9-member Stillwater Planning Commission
  - 6 members from Oak Park Heights
  - Washington County representatives
  - Mn/DOT and Consultant support
• Technical Advisory Committee:
  - Key staff from all partners + Consultant
• Desired Outcome
Guiding Study Principles

• Focus on points of agreement
• Listen respectfully / confirm “messages”
• Define disagreements
• Keep process transparent & fair
• Be sure roles are understood
• Create opportunities for feedback
• Publicize consensus, progress, and opportunities for input

Partnership Study process

• Establish values
• Identify issues
• Concept alternatives
• Analyze impacts
• Public involvement
• PAC recommendation (if...then...)

Establish Values

• Process: individual pre-survey, group discussion, vote
  1. Safety
  2. Geometric improvements
  3. Diversion to local streets
  4. Environment
  5. Compatibility with land use plans
  6. Aesthetics
  7. Three access points
St. Croix River Crossing Project

Public Involvement

- Policy Advisory Committee monthly meetings, survey
- 2 community meetings
- Stakeholder meetings/ input
- Good press coverage

Analysis tools

- Small area traffic forecasting model
- SimTraffic operational simulations
- Travel time analysis
- Perspective sketches
- Bike/ pedestrian analysis

St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroi
Perspective sketches

Illustrative cross sections

Bike/pedestrian analysis

St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
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Results

Lessons learned

- Agreement regarding need: projected problems vs. current experience
- Values, criteria, decisions: not a linear experience
- Useful data vs. hiding behind lots of numbers
- Visual aids are critical
- Using/trusting the larger process

Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution

Stakeholder Resolution Process

St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroi
Recent Events

St. Croix River Crossing Project

IECR Stakeholder Resolution process

• Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution assessed potential for consensus while project in suspension
• Identified possibility for consensus
• Recommended Stakeholder Resolution process
• Contracted with RESOLVE to provide stakeholder facilitation

IECR Stakeholder Resolution process

• Convened in June 2003
• To facilitate a common understanding of transportation, environmental and historic preservation issues
• To define various solutions to these issues by exploring advantages/disadvantages
• To arrive, if possible, at a consensus
• To reach agreement among permitting agencies on project components and regulatory conclusions: Sect. 7(a), Sect 106, Sect 4(f)
St. Croix River Crossing Project Stakeholder Group members

- **Federal agencies:** FHWA, NPS, ACHP, COE, USFWS, Coast Guard, EPA
- **State agencies:** DOTs, DNRs, SHPOs
- **Local governments:** City of Stillwater, City of Oak Park Heights, Town of St. Joseph, St. Croix County
- **NGOs:** National Trust for Historic Preservation, Sierra Club, Mn Center for Environmental Advocacy, Mn Preservation Alliance, Chamber of Commerce, Historic Lift Bridge Association, etc.

St. Croix River Crossing Project IECR Stakeholder Resolution process

- Developed project objectives/purpose
- Defined alternatives
- Reviewed analysis
- Subgroups focused on specific issue areas
- Guided public involvement
- Identified potential mitigation measures
- Provided feedback regarding level of consensus

St. Croix River Crossing Project Stakeholder Group alternatives

St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroi
Public Input through a number of meetings

Items for a Preferred Alternative Package

Alternative B-1
St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroi
Lessons Learned

Concluding thoughts

What's the best starting point – community objectives or transportation objectives?
- Establishing project need is critical
- Community objectives set the context
- Project objectives need to be defined cooperatively addressing both transportation and community needs

Project Website
http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix/
St Croix River Crossing Project Website:
www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix