

Texas Traffic Management Teams

Steven Z. Levine

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Mr. Levine provided a summary of the use of traffic management teams in the Houston area. These teams have been used successfully over a number of years on a variety of projects. Mr. Levine covered the following points in his presentation.

- The traveling public does not always realize who is responsible for the different transportation facilities, nor do they really care. Their major concern is that the facilities are maintained and operated to serve their needs. To accomplish this, traffic management teams—comprised of representatives from all the different agencies responsible for the system—have been used in many areas.
- The first traffic management team in Houston was formed in March 1981. The initial focus of this group was on the development of the Houston HOV lanes. This effort established the communication links and cooperation between agencies that continues today. The team has been meeting once a month for 11 years and the success of many projects in the Houston area can be traced to this coordination and cooperation.
- The traffic management team has addressed a number of issues. These include coordinating traffic control plans for major construction projects, enforcement of work zone safety and regulations, coordinating truck routings and the movement of hazardous material, developing plans for incident management, and coordinating transportation and special events.
- The team has recently been reorganized to provide for subcommittees to address specific problem areas and projects. Incident management and special events are the two areas currently being examined by the subcommittees. The use of these subcommittees

allows a smaller group to focus on a specific issue and helps resolve them in a more timely manner.

- Additional programs have been developed through the cooperative efforts of the traffic management team. An example of this is the successful Motorist Assistance Patrol.
- The team has also helped with public information, especially through participation in the annual Houston Automobile Show. Further, the team has been assisting with a variety of IVHS-related demonstration projects that are being implemented in the Houston area.
- Funding for the traffic management team has been borne by each of the involved agencies. Capital improvements for the different projects and programs are funded by the respective agencies.
- The team has withstood the test of time and is being viewed as an integral part of the activities associated with developing ITMS and IVHS in Houston.

Anaheim's Katella Corridor

Dr. Michael McNally

University of California-Irvine

Dr. McNally provided an overview of the institutional issues associated with the Katella Corridor project. This project is one part of the ITMS program for the city of Anaheim. Dr. McNally summarized the following points concerning the Katella Corridor project.

- The Katella Corridor project focused on interjurisdictional coordination of traffic signal timing. Four cities, Orange County, and Caltrans were all involved in the project. The first question addressed in the project was, Is interjurisdictional cooperation necessary for an coordinated signal system? The second question was, Is such cooperation feasible?

- The need for cooperation at the hardware, signal, and institutional levels were all examined. Key factors at the institutional level included administrative, financial, liability, and engineering issues.
- The initial administrative issues were associated with the staffing, staff training, and funding needed to implement the project. A key staff person is important to lead and move the project along. There is also a need for a commitment from higher levels within the organization. Financial issues focused on the need to obtain funding for the projects. A variety of funds were used in the Katella Corridor.
- Liability and engineering issues were also concerns. The liability associated with timing signals between municipalities had to be addressed through a series of intergovernmental agreements. The engineering issues were fairly conventional. These related to the technical issues associated with linking the different system elements together. One issue that needs to be addressed early in the process is at what level the system should be coordinated.
- Key elements for successful projects include a commitment from all agencies, adequate funding, leadership, and expertise.

Police Perspective

*Sergeant Paul A. Einreinhofer
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Sergeant Einreinhofer provided a perspective from law enforcement agencies in the implementation and operation of integrated traffic management systems. Major points made by Sergeant Einreinhofer included the following.

- Bergen County is home to many corporations, Giants Stadium, and has a population of approximately 850,000. The county is also the western terminus of the George

Washington Bridge, which serves Manhattan Island.

- Police and law enforcement agencies are concerned with the actual operation of the transportation system. What looks good on paper may not work in actual practice, and it is the police and highway patrol that must deal with the actual operation of the system.
- It is important to realize that traffic problems may not be the first priority for police departments. This is especially true when traffic problems are compared with life-threatening situations. Police agencies are concerned with how the system functions and are interested in determining their appropriate roles in ITMS. Police departments are also concerned with the transportation of hazardous materials, incident management, and public information.
- Management teams appear to be a good way to address many issues. Representatives from police and law enforcement agencies should be members of these teams. The incident command approach is used in Bergen County to provide one lead group to coordinate responses to major problems.
- Who is in charge and who pays are always major issues. Everyone wants to be in charge, but no one wants to be responsible for the cost of incident management and other activities. Reaching an agreement on these two issues is important.
- More sharing of information and coordination between police and enforcement agencies and the other groups responsible for ITMS is needed. Police and enforcement agencies should be viewed as important elements in implementing ITMS and should be involved in the different activities associated with planning and operating these systems.