

PROCEEDINGS: CONTEXT SENSITIVE DESIGN SYMPOSIUM

CSD Case Study

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Dennis German addressed the Maryland State Highway Administration's (MSHA) approach to initiating and sustaining the design thought process in the development of transportation improvement projects, in particular, Maryland's efforts to implement CSD, and some of their experiences in using CSD on specific projects.

- **US13** - A traditional state highway project which had little need for CSD. MSHA needed to be aware of environmental sensitivity and storm drainage since it's in a tide water area, but in general a straight forward project with not a lot to worry about.
- **MD450** - Not a traditional project highway project. Everything fit within CSD: bicycle accessibility, pedestrian safety and accessibility, streetscape elements, all fitting within the historic character of Annapolis, the most historic city in Maryland. The community and design professionals had to reach mutually acceptable solutions to complete this highway project.

Thinking Beyond the Pavement (TBTP) = Maryland's term for CSD.

It is an approach to guide the context sensitive development of transportation projects so that:

- 1) Projects are done right the first time - making the best use of resources and meeting customer expectations. Saves money.
- 2) Projects address the transportation need and are not streetscape projects
- 3) Projects balance all the stakeholders' objectives and are well-integrated with the surrounding communities and environment
- 4) Projects are safe

TBTP does not come at the expense of good engineering. TBTP enhances good engineering and results in a more successful project.

Most of the projects that the MSHA works on are not big projects. Most projects address things like aging infrastructure, existing roadways, and being sensitive to local needs. Western MD has many old roads that served an important purpose at one time, but their needs and functions have changed.

When Main Street is a State Highway (available at www.marylandroads.com) is a handbook for Community Safety and Enhancement projects. Originally intended as a manual for empowering local communities to speak with the SHW, it proved invaluable for helping engineers communicate with communities. Written by two planners, this publication highlights MSHA's commitment to the early, continuous and effective involvement of all stakeholders in the project development process.

The following are guidelines which the engineers of the SHA follow:

Key themes for MSHA Development:

- 1) Identify stakeholders early and involve them throughout the project
- 2) Develop a project vision and document it
- 3) Assemble an inter-disciplinary team early
- 4) Project management quality is critical to project success
- 5) Provide good communication throughout the project
- 6) Ensure continuity in project management, team membership use of consultants, and community involvement
- 7) Determine schedule and budget after consensus on vision
- 8) Document vision, decisions, and commitments
- 9) Evaluate project with full team and stakeholders

Qualities of the Project:

- 1) Project is a safe facility
- 2) Project satisfies purpose and need
- 3) Project is in harmony with the community
- 4) Project exceeds expectations of designers and stakeholders
- 5) Project involves efficient and effective use of resources
- 6) Project is built with minimal disruption to the community
- 7) Project is seen as having added lasting value to the community

Learn from the organization. Learn about the organization's limitations and how to work within them. Learn from the community. They know their needs and problems. Remember this is a joint venture and not a contest. The project proceeds more quickly when all involved see eye-to-eye.

Urban Reconstruction Projects Presented:

- Mt. Ranier Roundabout
- Towson County Seat
- Burkittsville Drainage Improvements
- Reisterstown Reconstruction
- Hancock Roadway Reconstruction

CSD or TBTP should not be viewed as an adversary. It saves money in the long run. It saves time in the design process (MSHA down to a year and a half). It's an economic benefit for the neighborhood, the community, the town, and thus the state. In Maryland, CSD is applied to all projects big and small.