PARTNERING GUIDELINES MANUAL

for

PARTNERING ON TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

April 2008

NOTIFICATION OF AMENDMENTS

TO THE PARTNERING GUIDELINES MANUAL

Any persons wanting to be notified of changes to the manual should subscribe to the department's one window notification service at:

www.infratrans.gov.ab.ca/Technical_Resources/index.htm

Executive Director, Program Management Branch
Alberta Transportation

PARTNERING GUIDELINES MANUAL

A Guide to Partnering on Alberta Transportation Projects

This guide is written for
Alberta Transportation (TRANS),
Consulting Engineers of Alberta (CEA) members,
and Alberta Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (ARHCA) members
working at the project level
to convey TRANS, CEA, and ARHCA's commitment to partnering,
to define responsibilities for partnering, and
to provide tools for successful partnering.

Partnership Concept

"Partnering, designed to create a positive, dispute prevention atmosphere during contract performance, uses team-building activities to help define common goals, improve communication, and foster a problem-solving attitude among a group of individuals who will work together throughout contract performance. A central objective of partnering is to encourage contracting parties to change from their traditional adversarial relationships to a more cooperative, team-based approach and to prevent disputes."

"Partnering is NOT about relaxing the contract terms or circumventing the processes, it is NOT about expecting service providers to do "extra" work for free, it is NOT simply about dispute resolution. It IS about realizing that time is money, and partnering DOES mean that if parties can each get what they want out of a situation, by each doing things in a slightly different way, then we all win."

April 2008

Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation

consulting engineers of alberta

arhca alberta roadbuilders & heavy construction association

2005 PARTNERSHIP CHARTER

The first partnership charter, called "Better Relationships for Better Highways," was signed by all three partners in 1999. This updated version of the Charter is being signed to renew and reinforce the commitment to the continuous improvement and development of this partnership.

We, the members of INFTRA, CEA and ARHCA, are a team of dynamic, unified, flexible professionals of diversified resources, committed to working together to deliver the safest and best value highway program for the benefit of all Albertans.

To succeed, we treat each other with trust and respect and communicate openly in pursuit of our common goals.

We are committed to:

Value/Economics

- Creating a culture that rewards excellence.
- Continuous improvement to enhance efficiencies to the benefit of the taxpayer.
- Maximizing the use of value engineering techniques to the benefit of the road user, where applicable.
- Enhancing construction site safety.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Resolving disputes in accordance with established procedures, in a timely manner.
- Striving for program delivery that is consistent across Alberta.
- Providing taxpayers with the best value through this strategic alliance.
- Understanding and respecting the roles and responsibilities of each participant of the alliance to enhance team performance.

Relationships

- Promoting an atmosphere of trust, respect and openness through social interaction, common training, shared work experience and improved communication.
- Ensuring healthy, long term relationships through commitment at all levels, and improved budget delivery mechanisms.
- Creating win/win/win results utilizing a three-way Performance Evaluation Process that is open,
- constructive and documented.

Consultant Selection

- Rewarding performance, quality and innovation
- A strong, viable industry founded on a stable and predictable future for qualified firms.

HR/People

- Attracting and maintaining a well trained, motivated, and satisfied workforce.

Signed at the Tri-Party Transportation Conference,
March 21, 2005

TABLE OF CONTENTS

This Partnering Guidelines Manual is intended to be a guideline manual, and is not intended to replace or supersede any legal documents including but not limited to contracts, specifications, and/or other construction documents.

CHAPTER 1

CONSTRUCTION PARTNERING ON TRANS PROJECTS

"There is no such thing as a self-made man. You reach your goals only with the help of others."
George Shin

Background

TRANS, the CEA, and the ARHCA have practiced construction partnering on some larger projects since 1999. The three parties signed a partnering charter in 1999, and it was renewed in 2005. The updated charter was intended to "renew and reinforce the commitment to the continuous improvement and development of this partnership".

In January, 2004, the three parties held a facilitated workshop to review how the tri-party working relationship was functioning. As a result of this session, members of the three parties on the Operations Committee worked to formalize a "partnering" style model and process to maximize the working relationships between the parties.

In July, 2006, a partnering process for TRANS projects was finalized where Annual Regional Partnering Sessions would be conducted prior to the start of each construction season and that a Preconstruction Partnering Session would be held prior to the beginning of each TRANS project. Both of these Partnering Sessions would involve Regional representatives from TRANS, as well as representatives from the member companies of the CAE (the consultants) and the ARHCA (the contractors).

Larger formal partnering sessions will continue with the larger projects. (Also see *Chapter 6*)

What is the process?

The purpose of the Annual Regional Partnering Sessions is to bring together parties from TRANS, the consultants, and the contractors who will be working on TRANS projects during the upcoming construction season. The actual process may vary from year to year. It may include an update on the upcoming construction program, and participants may work together to identify potential upcoming key issues and problems, and create potential solutions to address them. The group may also develop or review a Partnering Charter for the upcoming construction season that will set the foundation for partnering on all TRANS projects for the upcoming season. It is expected that the Charter will be posted at the job sites. in the Regions for which they were developed.

There will be at least two Regional Partnering Sessions held in Alberta each spring. One session will be held in Southern Alberta for parties working on Central and Southern Region TRANS projects, and one session held in Northern Alberta for parties working on North Central and Peace Region TRANS projects. Any of the TRANS Regions may hold an independent session if the demand or complexity of projects in the Region warrants it.

Consultants and contractors should consider attending the Regional Partnering Sessions for the Regions they expect to be working in during the upcoming construction season. If a consultant or contractor expects to be working in both the Central/Southern and North Central/Peace Regions during the upcoming season, they should consider attending both sessions.

Ideally, at least two senior representatives from each of the main consulting firms and contractors will attend the Regional Partnering Session. TRANS managers from the relevant Regions will also attend the sessions. If there are third parties that can have a significant impact on construction projects in any Region, they may also be invited.

Based on the mutual commitment to partnering expressed in the 2005 Partnership Charter, it is expected that all three parties will share the costs of the construction partnering sessions.

What level of partnering is appropriate for different projects?

The TRANS partnering process generally includes formal partnering using a third party independent facilitator on larger, more complex projects. This is because these projects generally carry more risk than smaller, less complex projects.

How can the potential risk of any given project be determined, and when is it beneficial to expand the partnering process to include an independent facilitator?

One good practice is to have TRANS, the Consultant, and the Contractor each complete a common (i.e. the same) risk assessment review for each project, compare the results of their assessments, and determine the relative risk of each project.

One risk assessment review tool is the *Partnering Potential Indicator* (*PPI*)*. (Further information on the PPI is included in *Chapter 6*)

Some guidelines for the review are as follows.

- TRANS will complete a risk assessment review tool (likely the PPI) prior to developing the Terms of Reference for projects, and determine if the projects are at a high enough risk level to require a full partnering session with an independent third party facilitator. The Terms of Reference will identify if a full partnering session is required for the project.
- A risk assessment review tool (likely the PPI) will be provided by TRANS to the consultant and the contractor for each project, at least two weeks prior to the Preconstruction Partnering Session
- For every project that has not been designated to require a full partnering session, TRANS, the consultant, and the contractor should have two key people from the project complete the PPI. The risk assessment tool helps to evaluate and identify risks from many different components of a project.
- Each of the parties should compare the results of their internal reviews, and ensure that there is agreement within their own organization on their assessments.

- The Project Sponsor will request and receive the PPI results from the consultants and contractors one week prior to the project Preconstruction Partnering Session and the pre-construction meeting.
- The comparative results of the PPI will be provided by the Project Sponsor at the Preconstruction Partnering Session.
- The parties *(TRANS, the consultant, and the contractor*) will use the PPI evaluations as one method of identifying potential issues and problems by comparing each party's evaluation of the overall risk of the project, and perhaps more important, any significant differences between any of the parties in perceived risk ratings for any of the components of the project.
- If there are significant differences in the risk assessments of any of the components of the project, these should be discussed regarding why there are differences. Potential risks can then be identified, and communications enhanced and possible solutions identified
- Projects should be considered at three levels of risk:
  1. **High risk –** conduct a full partnering session with an independent facilitator (should be identified by TRANS prior to developing Terms of Reference, which will identify projects that require full partnering).
  2. **Medium risk –** a full partnering session with either the TRANS Project Sponsor or using an independent facilitator are both good options.
  3. **Low risk –** the planned process of a partnering session with the TRANS Project Sponsor will cover the level of risk for this project (see *Chapter 5 – Preconstruction Partnering Sessions*).

  ***Note* –** see the guidelines on the PPI in *Chapter 6* for further information and risk evaluation scales.
- Regardless of the level of partnering that is conducted on any project, the completion of the risk evaluation analysis and comparison exercise between the three parties is a very good method of comparing each party's perception of the project, and opens the door to valuable communications about the project prior to its start-up. These assessments will be used in the Preconstruction Partnering Sessions.

Celebrations

By their nature, construction projects often have their share of challenges, disagreements and difficulties. However, there are almost always more good times and successes on projects than difficulties. Given the accelerating pace in today's workplaces and construction projects, there often doesn't seem to be enough time to celebrate projects' successes even though they almost always outnumber the problems and difficulties.

It is important that the parties on a construction project take the time to celebrate their successes as partners. In *Chapter 5 – Preconstruction Partnering Sessions*, there are some suggestions for celebrations that can easily be done on any project. These go a long ways towards improving relations on projects as people get to know each other better and celebrate their successes. This almost always results in benefit for the project itself, and often carries over to future projects.

* ***Partner Your Project*** *(p.p. 71-74)* ***by Sue Dyer****, Pendulum Publishing, Livermore California, 1997*

CHAPTER 2

CONSTRUCTION PARTNERING – WHAT IS IT?

"Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their view point."
Gandhi

History of Construction Partnering

Construction partnering is not a new concept – it has actually been around informally since construction began. In 1929, construction started on the eighty-five story Empire State Building. It was the tallest building in the world at that time, containing sixty-seven elevators, and was completed in eighteen months – a masterpiece of organization between owners, architects, engineers, builders, and other key contractors. During some weeks, four and a half stories of steel framework were constructed.

This remarkably successful project was the result of the construction teams' commitment to continuous cooperation, open communication, spirit of trust, and shared commitment to complete this project on schedule.

In 1987, the Construction Industry Institute (CII) in the United States established a task force on partnering to evaluate the feasibility of applying partnering to construction projects. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers embraced the construction partnering concept on its projects, and in 1990 said "Clearly, the best dispute resolution is dispute prevention… By taking the time at the start of a project to identify common goals, common interests, lines of communication, and a commitment to cooperative problem solving, we encourage the will to resolve disputes and achieve project goals." In 1991, the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) endorsed the Corps of Engineers' concept of partnering, and in 1993 created the *Marvin M. Black Excellence in Partnering Awards* for construction projects that epitomized the principles of partnering.

Formal construction partnering came to Canada in 1995 when the Department of National Defence and Defence Construction Canada adopted partnering in the delivery of the Department's facilities infrastructure program. The concept has spread across Canada over the past 10 years, and is gaining acceptance as project owners, designers, engineers, architects and contractors come to understand the benefits to all parties of applying the principles of construction partnering.

What is Partnering?

Partnering is a collaborative approach to construction rather than the adversarial approach that has become the more common way of doing business in the construction industry. Everyone involved in the construction project agrees to treat everyone else as a partner or fellow team member, based on the premise that working together towards a common goal creates success and mutual gain.

Partnering **does not** take the place of the legal relationship defined by the contract or specifications – rather, the partnering process attempts to establish working relationships among the parties through a mutually developed, formal strategy of commitment and communication.

The Construction Industry Institute (CII) in 1991 defined partnering as simply a relationship wherein:

1. All seek win-win solutions
2. Value is placed on long-term relationships
3. Trust and openness are norms
4. An environment for long-term profitability exists
5. All are encouraged to openly address any problem
6. All understand that no party benefits from exploitation of another party
7. Innovation is encouraged
8. Each partner is aware of the others' needs, concerns and objectives, and is
9. Interested in helping their partner(s) achieve such
10. Overall performance is improved

Partnering is not to be construed as a legal "partnership" with the associated joint liabilities. Nor is partnering a quick fix to be applied to all working relationships. For partnering to be successful, it requires a mutual relationship that includes the presence of trust, the commitment to fairness, development of mutual goals and objectives, and timely responsiveness by all parties.

A key trait of partnering is the rapid resolution of disputes at the lowest possible level, and the development of a process that allows this to happen and is accepted as the norm by all parties.

CHAPTER 3

THE BENEFITS OF PARTNERING

"Discourage litigation. Persuade your neighbours to compromise whenever you can. Point out to them how the nominal winner is often a real loser – in fees, expenses, and waste of time."
Abraham Lincoln

A Construction Industry Institute (CII) research team (July 1991, June 1996) has determined that many organizations have made progress in increasing their competitive advantage through partnering. The results of their research show the following benefits to partnering on construction projects:

COST

Area	Results
Total Project Cost (TPC)	10% reduction
Construction Administration	24% reduction
Marketing	50% reduction
Engineering	$10/hour reduction
Value Engineering	337% increase
Claims (% of TPC)	87% reduction
Profitability	25% increase

SAFETY

Area	Results
Hours without lost time accident	4 million vs. 48,000 industry standard
Lost work days	0 vs. 6.8% industry standard
Number of cases requiring medical attention	74% reduction
Safety rating	5% of national average

SCHEDULE

Area	Results
Overall Project	20% reduction
Schedule Changes	48% reduction
Schedule Compliance	Increased from 85% to 100%

QUALITY

Area	Results
Rework	50% reduction
Change orders	80% reduction
Direct work rate	42% increase

CLAIMS

Area	Results
Number of Claims	83% reduction
Projects with claims	68% reduction
Claims costs as a % of total project costs	87% reduction

OTHER

Area	Results
Personal job satisfaction	30% increase
Projects were less adversarial	85% of respondents
Improved resource planning	85% of respondents
Increased openness on projects	82% of respondents
Increased trust on projects	78% of respondents
Fewer errors	82% of respondents
Improved quality	96% of respondents
Engineering cost reduction	10% of respondents
Improved communication and teamwork	82% of respondents

The CII research identified that partnering will significantly benefit owners, contractors, engineers, architects, designers, and other participant parties in the following areas:

1. Improved Ability to Respond to Changing Business Conditions
2. Improved Quality and Safety
3. Reduced Cost, Schedule and Improved Profit (Value)
4. More Effective Utilization of Resources

Journal of Management in Engineering Research

In 1995, Dr. Erik Larson, Associate Professor from the College of Business at Oregon State University, researched 280 construction projects to examine the relationships between construction project success and formal partnering compared to alternative approaches (adversarial, guarded adversarial, and informal partnering) to managing the owner-contractor relationship. Success was measured in terms of controlling costs, meeting schedules, technical performance, avoiding litigation, and satisfying customers. Dr. Larson was trying to answer the question “does partnering work, or is it simply another management fad in which individual case accounts often report dramatic results?”

Dr. Larson’s findings indicated that formally partnered construction projects achieved superior results in all of the above areas when compared to projects managed in an adversarial, guarded adversarial, and even informally partnering manner. The success of formal partnering was found in projects regardless of whether the contract was awarded on a low-bid or non-low-bid basis.

CHAPTER 4

TRANS REGIONAL PARTNERING SESSIONS

People can succeed at almost anything for which they have unlimited enthusiasm.
Charles Schwab

Regional Partnering Sessions

Each TRANS Regional office will be responsible for organizing its own Regional Partnering Session. All firms that are currently working on, or are expected to work on, TRANS projects within the Region during the upcoming construction season will be invited to take part in the Regional Partnering Sessions. Some Regions may combine the Regional Partnering Session with other Regions or with their "Consultants Start-up Meeting" to reduce duplication of effort and the number of separate sessions that consultants and contractors will have to attend.

Who Should Attend

One of the most important contributors to successful partnering workshops is the invitation and attendance of all stakeholders who will have significant impact on the projects, including TRANS, consultants, contractors, and third parties.

The following list is a guide to help determine the parties to invite to the Regional Partnering Sessions.

Consideration should be given to inviting the following to the Regional Partnering Sessions:			
TRANS	**Consultants**	**Contractors**	**Third Parties**
Regional Director(s)	CEA Executive Director	ARHCA Chief Executive Officer	Key suppliers
Construction Manager(s)	Corporate Support	Corporate Support	Key subcontractors
Bridge Manager(s)	Project Director	Contracts Manager	Alberta One-Call or other utility representatives
Construction Engineer(s)	Project Manager	Project Manager / Superintendent	Major Municipality Representatives
Bridge Engineer(s)	Project Engineer	Foreman	Environment Officials
Construction Tech(s)			Safety Officials
Bridge Tech(s)			Federal Department of Fisheries

At the end of the Regional Partnering Session, a Regional Partnering Charter will be developed and agreed upon by those in attendance. This Regional Charter will form the basis for the Preconstruction Partnering Sessions on all TRANS projects in the Region(s) for the upcoming year. It is expected that the Charter will be posted at the job sites in the Regions for which they were developed.

The Regional Partnering Session should take place prior to the start of the summer construction season. As the TRANS/CEA/ARHCA Tri-Party Conference is typically held in March, the Regional Partnering Session will ideally be held shortly thereafter, preferably by the end of March. This allows for any issues brought forward at the Tri-Party Conference to be addressed at the Regional level during the Partnering Session. The session should be a full day presentation and workshop, led by a facilitator skilled in the partnering process. The Regional Partnering Session may be combined with the Annual Consultant Start-up meetings currently held in some Regions.

Agenda for Regional Partnering Sessions

While the actual process may vary from year to year, one suggested framework for the agenda for the Regional Partnering Session is as follows:

1. **INTRODUCTIONS:**
    - Brief Regional project overview by Department staff
    - Principals opening remarks (Department, Consultant and Contractor)
    - Introduce Partnering Facilitator
    - Introductions of participants

2. **PARTNERSHIP CONCEPT (By Facilitator):**
    - Introduction to partnering concept
    - Keys to successful partnerships
    - Introduce the Partnering Agreement / Charter
    - Group Exercises – Teambuilding exercise

3. **ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS:**
    - At the Preconstruction Partnering Sessions, an Issue Resolution Ladder must be developed.
    - In developing the Issue Resolution Ladder, specific names should be assigned to each level, and the maximum time that an issue can remain unresolved at each level prior to escalating it must be agreed upon.
    - Each party to a problem or issue needs to understand the other person's position – understand it well enough that they can explain it to the other's satisfaction. **This is key to resolving the issue at all levels of the Issue Resolution Ladder.**

      Note: See *Appendix A* for sample Issue Resolution Ladder, Issue Resolution Ground Rules, and additional information.

    - Group Discussion/Exercises

4. PARTNERING AT PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING:

- Review of Pre-Construction Meeting Agenda and relevant attachments.
- Preconstruction Partnering Session Agenda (See *Chapter 5*)

5. PARTNERING EVALUATION AND MONITORING:

- The partnering relationship is to be reviewed by the three parties at project meetings, and at the end of each project as part of the Tri-Party Meeting. ***Note***: See *Appendix B-I* for Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring information
- An annual summary of the effectiveness of partnering on TRANS projects will be prepared by TRANS and distributed to CEA and ARHCA representatives through the Operations Committee

6. IDENTIFY KEY REGIONAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

Group Exercises:

- Identify key issues, problems and concerns that the parties feel they may face in the upcoming season

7. CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING:

Group Exercises:

- For the identified issues, problems and concerns, groups develop alternatives to address and minimize the issues and concerns

8. DEVELOP ANNUAL REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP CHARTER:

- Facilitator to gain agreement to the Annual Regional Partnership Charter (see sample below)
- All partners present are to agree to the charter
- The amended Charter is copied and sent to each participant.

Sample Text for Regional Partnering Charter

(***Note***: See *Appendix C* for additional information on developing charters)

In the spirit of the 2005 Tri-Party Partnership Charter, the Southern Region partners are committed to the successful delivery of the 2006/07 construction program. This will be achieved by working in a co-operative and adaptive environment.

Our values include:

- **Enhancing safety**
- **Preserving the environment**
- **Clear, open and honest communication, and**
- **Effective and timely dispute resolution.**

9. CLOSE:

- Close the session

Note: See *Appendix D* for additional information on preparing for the Regional Partnering Session.

CHAPTER 5

PRECONSTRUCTION PARTNERING SESSIONS

I don't like that man. I must get to know him better.
Abraham Lincoln

Background

As outlined in Chapter 3, a partnering process for TRANS projects was finalized in July, 2006 in which Annual Regional Partnering Sessions will be conducted prior to the start of each summer construction season, and a Preconstruction Partnering Session will be held prior to the beginning of each TRANS project. Both of these Partnering Sessions will involve Regional representatives from TRANS, as well as representatives from the Consultants and the Contractors. Third parties with a significant impact on the projects should also be included in the partnering sessions.

It is expected that larger formal partnering sessions will continue with the larger projects (see *Chapter 6*).

This chapter outlines the Preconstruction Partnering Session.

Preconstruction Partnering Session

The Preconstruction Partnering Session should be attended by the appropriate representatives from each of the three partner organizations, TRANS, the consultant, and the contractor, and relevant third parties.

The purpose of the Preconstruction Partnering Session is to:

- Review the lines of communication
- Create the issue resolution ladder
- Review the three parties' perceived risks from their completion of the PPI, and identify potential solutions to proactively reduce the risks
- Gain "buy-in" to the Regional Partnering Charter (See *Chapter 3*) from all participants involved in the Preconstruction Partnering Session.

It is important to note that **the partnering concept is focused on the relationships of the individuals involved in the project and not the specifications or contractual issues of the project**. Issues that are covered in specifications or contract documents are not to be addressed at the preconstruction partnering session. Rather, the session should aim to clarify roles and responsibilities to ensure a successful project, to identify potential issues, problems and concerns on the project (outside of the specifications or contract documents), and to work together towards proactively addressing these potential issues, problems and concerns.

Timing

The Preconstruction Partnering Session should be held on the same day as, but prior to the general pre-construction meeting for all TRANS projects except those for which a larger formal partnering session is being held.

Participation

The Preconstruction Partnering Session should be attended by all individuals on the project with decision-making authority. It is recognized that Corporate Support representatives from the Consultant and Contractor may not be available to attend all Preconstruction Partnering Sessions. However, they may want to attend the sessions for more complex and larger projects.

Representatives from third party organizations that can impact the project should be invited to attend the entire session, or a specific part of the session set aside where third party(s) can work with the other groups to address the third party's areas of impact and/or concern. Examples are included below.

Consideration should be given to inviting the following to the Partnering Preconstruction Sessions:			
TRANS	**Consultant**	**Contractor**	**Third Parties**
Project Sponsor	Corporate Support	Corporate Support	Key suppliers
Project Administrator	Project Director / Manager	Project Manager / Superintendent	Key subcontractors
Construction Engineer(s)	Construction Inspector	Site Foreman	Alberta One-Call
Construction Tech(s)			Major Municipality Representatives
Bridge Tech(s)			Environment Officials
			Safety Officials
			Federal Department of Fisheries

Partnering Facilitator

The Partnering Facilitator will be assigned by the Project Sponsor. Unless an independent facilitator is assigned, the Partnering Facilitator will be an TRANS Representative familiar with the project and who has sufficient experience with the partnering process to facilitate the partnering session for the particular project. It is expected that the Project Sponsor will be the most appropriate choice as Partnering facilitator for the majority of TRANS projects. (See *Chapter 6*)

Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring

The partnering relationship will be reviewed by the three parties at project meetings, and at the end of each project as part of the Tri-Party Meeting. At the Post Construction Tri-Party Meeting, the partnering relationship will also be reviewed. (***Note***: See *Appendix B-II* for the Tri-Party Debriefing Meeting Agenda).

An annual summary of the effectiveness of partnering on TRANS projects will be prepared by TRANS and distributed to CEA and ARHCA representatives through the Operations Committee.
(***Note***: See *Appendix B-I* for Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring information.)

PRECONSTRUCTION PARTNERING AGENDA

Key Contacts

At the beginning of the Preconstruction Partnering Session, complete the following **key contact** information, and agree on the "**common project identifiers**" (e.g. Project name, etc.).

Date

CONTRACT NO.: ______________ **AGREEMENT NO.:** ______________
PROJECT: ______________________________
CONTRACTOR: ______________ **CONSULTANT:** ______________

Meeting Date: **Place:**

Meeting Attended By:

DEPARTMENT	PHONE	FAX	CELL	E-mail
Regional Director -				
Project Sponsor -				
Project Administrator -				
Field Technologist -				

CONSULTANT	PHONE	FAX	CELL	E-mail
Corporate Support -				
Project Director -				
Project Manager -				

CONTRACTOR	PHONE	FAX	CELL	E-mail
Corporate Manager -				
Contract Manager -				
Site Superintendent -				

SUBCONTRACTORS	PHONE	FAX	CELL	E-mail

THIRD PARTIES	PHONE	FAX	CELL	E-mail

Preconstruction Partnering Agenda (cont'd)

1. **INTRODUCTIONS:**
    - Self introductions
    - Brief project overview by Department staff
    - Principals opening remarks (Department, Consultant and Contractor)
    - Introduce Partnering Facilitator (most often the Project Sponsor – also see *Chapter 5*)

2. ***Ground Rules*** **for the Preconstruction Partnering Session**
   Following are typical ***Ground Rules*** for the Preconstruction Partnering Session. They should be agreed upon and modified if the participants wish to.
    - No rank
    - Everyone participates
    - Listen
    - Keep an open mind
    - Agree if it makes sense
    - Disagree or ask questions if it doesn't make sense
    - Don't speak when others are speaking
    - Have fun!
    - Turn off cell phones, Blackberries, and pagers

3. **PARTNERSHIP CONCEPT (By Facilitator):**
    - Introduction to *Partnership Concept* and *Regional Charter* (see below)

Partnership Concept

"Partnering, designed to create a positive, dispute prevention atmosphere during contract performance, uses team-building activities to help define common goals, improve communication, and foster a problem-solving attitude among a group of individuals who will work together throughout contract performance. A central objective of partnering is to encourage contracting parties to change from their traditional adversarial relationships to a more cooperative, team-based approach and to prevent disputes."

"Partnering is NOT about relaxing the contract terms or circumventing the processes, it is NOT about expecting service providers to do "extra" work for free, it is NOT simply about dispute resolution. It IS about realizing that time is money, and partnering DOES mean that if parties can each get what they want out of a situation, by each doing things in a slightly different way, then we all win."

Sample Regional Charter

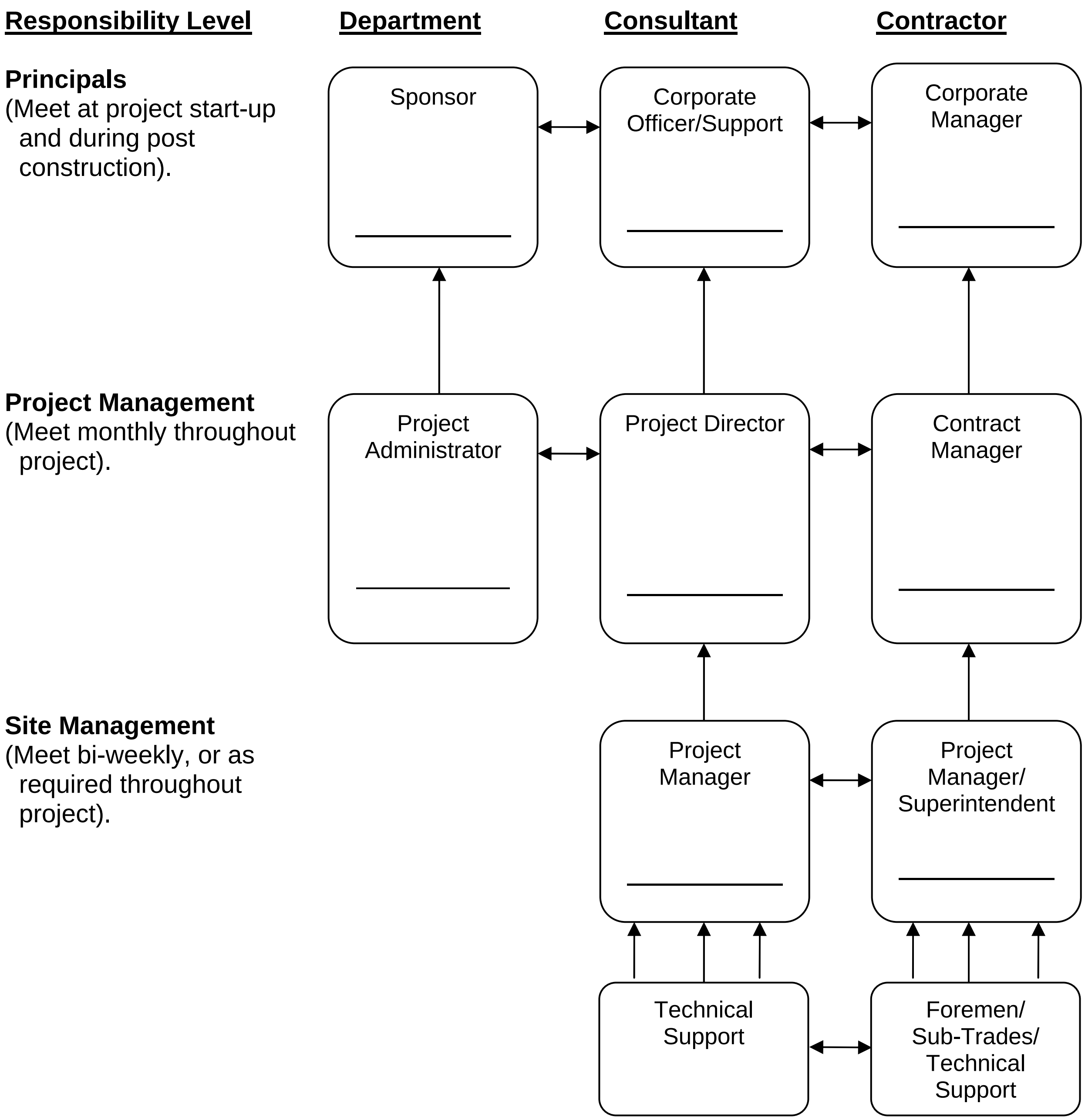
In the spirit of the 2005 Tri-Party Partnership Charter, the Southern Region partners are committed to the successful delivery of the 2006/07 construction program. This will be achieved by working in a co-operative and adaptive environment.

Our values include:

- **Enhancing safety**
- **Preserving the environment**
- **Clear, open and honest communication, and**
- **Effective and timely dispute resolution.**

4. PROJECT ORGANIZATION & LINES OF COMMUNICATION:

Discuss the "who's who" and the lines of communication for the project, and complete the form. Make any necessary changes to the form.



Preconstruction Partnering Agenda (cont'd)

5. ISSUE RESOLUTION PROCESS:

- At the Preconstruction Partnering Session, an Issue Resolution Ladder must be developed.
- In developing the Issue Resolution Ladder, specific names should be assigned to each level, and the maximum time that an issue can remain unresolved at each level prior to elevating it must be agreed upon.
- The facilitator should emphasize that each party to a problem or issue needs to understand the other person's position – understand it well enough that they can explain it to the other's satisfaction. **This is key to resolving the issue at all levels of the Issue Resolution Ladder.**
- Introduction to ***Issue Resolution Ground Rules***
  1. Issues must be reported to all affected parties within five days of being identified.
  2. Resolve issues at the lowest possible level.
  3. Unresolved issues will be elevated upwards – **without delay**.
  4. Elevating an issue is not a negative or bad thing; it is part of an efficient process.
  5. Ignoring an issue or making no decision on an issue is unacceptable.
  6. Any party can decide that it's time to elevate an issue.
  7. No jumping levels on the ladder by any of the parties.
  8. No one is expected to make a decision outside their authority (i.e. all partners are expected to act within their authority limits).
  9. When an issue cannot be resolved at the current level, write down the agreed upon problem, each party's best ideas for resolving the issue, and the areas where the parties are stuck.
  10. When elevating, outline when cost or schedule will be impacted, and to what extent.
  11. Responses at each level of elevation should be completed within the time limit for that level – even if the decision is to elevate to the next level.

- The facilitator should then work with the session participants to assign specific names to each level, and the maximum time that an issue can remain unresolved at each level prior to elevating it.

  Note: See ***Appendix A*** for sample Issue Resolution Ladder and additional information.

6. IDENTIFY KEY PROJECT ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The Facilitator (likely the Project Sponsor) distributes the summarized results of the *Partnering Potential Indicator (PPI)* from all 3 parties.

- These results can form the basis to start identifying key issues, problems and concerns of the three parties.
- Significant differences in ratings of any of the items from the PPI between any of the three parties should be hi-lighted and discussed
- Items that any or all of the three parties identified as high risk should be discussed
- Identify and prioritize potential key issues, problems and concerns that any of the parties face on the project (outside of the specifications or contract documents)

7. CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

- For the identified issues, problems and concerns (starting with the highest priorities), groups determine plans and actions to address and minimize the issues and concerns

8. PARTNERING EVALUATION AND MONITORING:

- **On-going**

  Discuss the state or health of the partnership as an agenda item at regular project meetings.

  Sample agenda items:

  - Review the frequency and depth of issue/problem escalations.
  - Review whether roles and communications channels continue to be clear
  - Review whether the behaviour of the partners reflects the spirit of the partnership

  (***Note***: In lieu of the sample agenda items above, see *Appendix B-I* for Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring tools)

- **Final**

  - At Post Construction Tri-Party Meeting – review the state or health of the partnership (***Note***: See *Appendix B-II* for the Tri-Party Debriefing Meeting Agenda).

9. CELEBRATIONS

At the Preconstruction Partnering Session, the on-site level managers should choose and schedule on-going celebrations for the project at the beginning of the project.

A good option is to have each of the three parties alternate responsibilities for hosting/handling celebrations. A minimum recommended time between celebrations is one month, with celebrations of some sort held every second Friday being preferred.

The success of a partnership depends very much on the commitment of all parties and team members involved in the project. Celebrations of success on the project and in the partnership go a long ways towards keeping team members' commitments and morale as high as possible.

Celebrations should be conducted periodically throughout the project rather than waiting for the end of the project to recognize successes and build morale.

Some celebrations that work well on construction projects include:

• BBQ lunch on-site	• T-shirts with team logo
• Order pizza for site lunch	• Coffee mugs
• Hardhat stickers	• Sporting event attendance
• Host VIP tours of the jobsite	• Letters of acknowledgement
• Feature employee in newsletter	• Have senior managers serve breakfast
• Give half-day or whole Friday off	• Implement Partnering Excellence awards

Note: See *Appendix E* for additional Tools to Assist in Making Partnerships a Success

10. CLOSE

- Facilitator to gain agreement to the Annual Regional Partnership Charter (***Note***: See *Appendix C* for Additional Information for Developing Regional Charters)
- The Annual Regional Partnership Charter is copied and sent to each participant and posted in the job site trailers.

11. ISSUE A REPORT / MINUTES

Issue a report/minutes to all participants that includes the critical information from the session:

- The completed Key Contacts page
- The completed Project Organization & Lines of Communication page
- The completed Issue Resolution Ladder and Ground Rules
- The key issues, problems and concerns that were identified, and
- The plans and actions established to address them

These items become agenda items at each project meeting where the partnering process is evaluated and monitored (see *Appendix B-I* for Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring tools)

CHAPTER 6

PARTNERING POTENTIAL INDICATOR* – RISK ANALYSIS

Take calculated risks. That is quite different from being rash.
George S. Patton

RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Partnering Potential Indicator

The ***Partnering Potential Indicator*** **(*PPI*)** is a tool to help evaluate whether or not to partner a particular construction project. It is based on research on hundreds of projects ranging in size from $400,000 to $2.5 billion, and it measures the risk of potential disputes.

To use the **PPI** for a project, respond to each statement, indicating whether you feel that you strongly agree, strongly disagree, or are somewhere in between with how the statement applies to the project. Your first reaction is most accurate – spending time analyzing will give you less accurate results.

It is suggested that each party involved in the project have at least two to five people complete the **PPI** for the project to assess their perceptions of risk to the project, and then to compare their scores to determine if partnering will benefit the project. *Note that if there are vastly different scores between parties or individuals that complete the **PPI**, there should be discussions about where and why there are differences in perceptions about the risk to the project.*

How to Complete the *Partnering Potential Indicator*

Enter your scores to the statements as follows:

Strongly Agree	1
Agree	1.5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2
Disagree	2.5
Strongly Disagree	3

How to Interpret your *Partnering Potential Indicator* Scores

If your score is between:

80 – 99 **Low Risk** - There is **low risk to this project's success.** Partnering will still help reduce risk by examining each challenge and planning for its management, and will provide an opportunity to gain an understanding of what each stakeholder needs so you can better execute the project. The Project Sponsor is a good choice to facilitate low risk projects.

70 – 79 **Medium Risk - This project has "medium" risks to its success.** Partnering offers your project a significant benefit. Working through the major challenges identified in the PPI (i.e. statements with scores of 1 – 1.5) will significantly increase the chances for a successful project. You may want to consider using either an independent third party facilitator or the Project Sponsor to facilitate medium risk projects.

33 – 69 **High Risk - This project faces a significant threat of conflict, communication, and relationship problems**. This project has enormous benefit to be gained from partnering, as it has many challenges that are best faced as a team. It should be strongly considered for full partnering using an independent third party facilitator.

* ***Partner Your Project*** *(p.p. 71-74)* ***by Sue Dyer****, Pendulum Publishing, Livermore California, 1997*

Partnering Potential Indicator

Project:		**Score**	**Scoring Criteria**
1	You don't know the people you will be working with		
2	The design is complex		
3	There is a history of personality conflicts		
4	The contract documents are unclear or ambiguous		
5	There is a significant power imbalance between two or more organizations		
6	There are many different organizations (in addition to the Tri-Party members) working on this project		
7	The construction is complex		
8	Some of the people are inexperienced		
9	Cooperation of others is needed for success		
10	You are concerned about the performance of one or more stakeholders		
11	The project is rushed, and pre-planning is minimal		
12	There are severe budget constraints		
13	There is a history of disputes between the parties or individuals on the project		
14	A third party poses a significant threat		Strongly Agree 1 Agree 1.5 Neither Agree nor Disagree 2 Disagree 2.5 Strongly Disagree 3
15	One or more of the organizations has a "bureaucratic" organizational culture		
16	There is a significant potential for changed conditions during the completion of the project		
17	The project is politically visible or challenging		
18	The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders are not clear and/or understood		
19	Time is critical		
20	A supplier(s) is critical to success of the project		
21	There are potential environmental issues		
22	Site conditions are a challenge		
23	This is a large project for you		
24	Stakeholder(s) may be unresponsive to problems		
25	Documents may not be interpreted fairly		
26	Another stakeholder is not a team player		
27	Payments may not be prompt		
28	There is no strong leadership		
29	The scope of the work is unclear or inaccurate		
30	One or more of the stakeholders is inexperienced with this type of project		*Adapted from* ***Partner Your Project*** *(p.p. 71-74)* ***by Sue Dyer****, Pendulum Publishing, Livermore California, 1997*
31	You have never worked together before		
32	You are not concerned about a long-term relationship		
33	There are no opportunities for innovation in this project that you would like to explore		
	Total		

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ISSUE RESOLUTION LADDER

Elevation of an Issue

One of the cornerstones of partnering is the issue resolution ladder. This process is also called elevation of an issue. The issue resolution ladder is created during the partnering workshop (or at the Preconstruction Partnering Session). At the top of the ladder are the three primary parties to the project, TRANS, the consultant, and the contractor. Lining up behind these three primary parties are all of the other project stakeholders. For example, behind the contractor are the subcontractors and suppliers. Behind the consultant might be design, surveys, materials testing, etc...However, the issue resolution ladder does not remove or alter any contractual obligations between the contractors and their subcontractors or suppliers.

Each party to an issue needs to understand the other person's position – understand it well enough that they can explain it to the other's satisfaction.

Sample Issue Resolution Ladder (**Note –** *Assign names during creation of the ladder at the partnering session*)				
Level	**TRANS**	**Consultant**	**Contractor**	***Sample*** **Max. Time**
D	Project Sponsor	Corporate Support	Corporate Manager	2 days
C	Project Administrator	Project Director	Contract Manager	2 days
B		Project Manager	Project Manager /Superintendent	1 day
A		Field Technologist	Foreman	1 day

It is expected that the maximum time an issue will remain in the ladder will be 6 days. This will ensure that the claimant may still file a Notice of Claim within the seven day limit set out in the General Specifications.

Issue Resolution Ground Rules

1. Issues must be reported to all affected parties as soon as possible (ideally the day of noting the issue).
2. Resolve issues at the lowest possible level.
3. Unresolved issues will be elevated upwards – **without delay**.
4. Elevating an issue is not a negative or bad thing; it is part of an efficient process.
5. Ignoring an issue or making no decision on an issue is unacceptable.
6. Any party can decide that it's time to elevate an issue.
7. No jumping levels on the ladder by any of the parties.
8. No one is expected to make a decision outside their authority (i.e. all partners are expected to act within their authority limits).
9. When an issue cannot be resolved at the current level, write down the agreed upon problem, each party's best ideas for resolving the issue, and the areas where the parties are stuck.
10. When elevating, outline when cost or schedule will be impacted, and to what extent.
11. Responses at each level of elevation should be completed within the time limit for that level – even if the decision is to elevate to the next level.

The Issue Resolution Process

It is expected that all effort will be put into resolving issues within the timelines laid out in the issue resolution ladder. However, the resolution ladder is separate from the Claims Resolution Process in the contract documents and imposes no contractual or legal responsibilities on any of the parties. Therefore **it is imperative that all parties are aware of the time limits regarding submitting a Notice of Claim in the contract documents**.

The resolution process starts at the lowest level possible for each organization and proceeds up the ladder through the organizations' hierarchies until the issue is resolved. An issue is elevated to the next higher level when 1) an agreement cannot be reached at the current level within the agreed upon time, or 2) if more than the agreed upon time has passed without a solution, or 3) by request of one of the parties at the current level (after first informing the other party).

Elevation to the next level in the issue resolution ladder should be done in writing if possible. This can simply be a "speedy memo" addressed to the next level explaining the problem (issue) and identifying the points of disagreement. **This is not a Notice of Claim as defined in the contract documents and/or specifications.**

Once the issue is elevated, it is incumbent on the next level to meet as soon as possible to try to negotiate a resolution. It is important that a separate meeting be held to address the issue (don't try to deal with it, for example, in the middle of the weekly project meeting). Also, don't assume that the next level truly understands the issue and points of disagreement, or that there will be automatic concurrence with your position, even if you have discussed the issue previously.

If the issue is elevated to the top of the ladder without resolution, the dispute resolution mechanism defined in the contract and/or specifications is the next available step. **It is the responsibility of the party who is in disagreement with the decision to file a Notice of Claim within the timelines set out in the contract documents, typically within seven (7) days of the circumstance giving rise to the claim.**

At any time in the issue resolution ladder, any party may begin the formal dispute resolution process by submitting a Notice of Claim.

The process works if it is used. Many times when asked if an issue has been elevated, the project team says "no, it hasn't." No process will work if it isn't used. Given the complexities of projects, it is natural and expected that there will be problems and issues. What is unacceptable is to ignore a problem or issue*.

What is an Issue?

Many times no one on the project really understands that they are engaged in an issue. Most project team members work daily to resolve problems - so often that they fail to see that what was a project problem has now become a project issue. Here is a simple definition of what constitutes an issue: ***An issue is a disagreement between two or more people***. When an issue continues for some period of time without any movement toward solution, you are at an impasse.

When at an impasse, people are usually entrenched in their positions and want to WIN, or at least prove that they are right and that the other person is wrong.

The issue resolution ladder is designed to keep the parties from reaching an impasse. Any party involved in the issue can tell the other party(s) that they feel the issue has become a disagreement (issue) and thus move it into the formal dispute resolution process as detailed in the Contract Documents.

The Issue Resolution Ladder process works - it will preserve relationships and resolve problems and issues in a timely manner.

“I Can’t Give Up Now”

Another barrier is that people at project levels may feel that they have failed (and/or that they may be chastised) if they elevate an issue, or it may be that they want to maintain control at their level. Some issues stay at level 1 for four to five months when the agreed upon time to elevate was one day. Ongoing problems were the result – no cooperation, no communication, loss of production, not to mention high levels of stress. It is the responsibility of upper management to ensure that it is safe for field teams to honestly work to solve problems and issues, and to encourage them to elevate the issue to the next level if they can’t get it resolved themselves within the defined time frame. Elevation of an issue is not a sign of failure.

Issues Deserve Their Own Meeting

As stated before, when an issue is elevated it is important that a special meeting be held to discuss the issue at hand. Many times people will say “well, I talked to him at our weekly meeting”. This does not elevate the issue. You need to call and schedule a separate meeting, at which you will discuss, seek to understand, brainstorm ideas about, and seek resolution of only the issue. A special meeting should be held each time an issue is elevated to the next higher level.

* ***Caltrans – Partnering – Our Way of Doing Business.*** (2000), California Department of Transportation

APPENDIX B

PARTNERING EVALUATION AND MONITORING

B-I. Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring Tools

The partnering relationship is to be reviewed at bi-weekly and managers' meetings, and at the end of each project as part of the Tri-Party Meeting. Below are three tools that can be used and adapted for projects: **1. Successful Partnerships Checklist**
2. Partnering Relationship Review
3. Monthly Project Partnering Evaluation Survey

1. Successful Partnerships Checklist

The following *Successful Partnerships Checklist* is adapted from a checklist developed by ***R.D. Huddleston***, formerly of TRANS. It is an excellent checklist to use to monitor the health of construction partnering relationships. Points can be modified or added to suit the project.

SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS CHECKLIST

___ Senior members of the partners demonstrate a leadership role in the promotion and support of the partnership.

___ Partners refer to each other in positive terms when communicating with other partners, employees, divisions and the public.

___ Partners utilize a consultative process in all areas that are exceptions to the defined contract procedures.

___ Project employees of all partners meet on a periodic basis.

___ Partners develop performance standards and monitor the progress of the relationship.

___ Partners identify potential key issues, problems and concerns on the project (outside of the specifications and contract documents) and work together towards proactively addressing these potential issues, problems and concerns.

___ Partners continue to work at maintaining shared values of trust, openness and respect.

___ The partnership is fulfilling the Partnership Charter

___ There have been adequate celebrations of successes in the partnership (initiated by management)

2. Monthly Project Partnering Evaluation Survey*

The following *Monthly Project Partnering Evaluation Survey* can also be used as a guide to evaluate the partnering relationship at bi-weekly or monthly meetings. It can include the names of team members, or be anonymous. Questions can be modified to best suit the project.

Monthly Project Partnering Evaluation Survey No. _______

Time Period: From ____________ To_____________

You are (circle one): TRANS / Consultant / Contractor / Subcontractor / Other ______________

Name (optional): ____
Project ____
Consultant _______________________ Contractor _____________________________

Your input is very important to evaluate this project

Measuring scale: 1 to 10 with 10 indicating your highest level of satisfaction

Please indicate your level of satisfaction on this project:

		Satisfaction Level
1	Mutual respect, honesty, trust and fairness How can we improve: ___________________________ ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2	Horizontal and vertical communication How can we improve: ___________________________ ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3	Disputes resolved efficiently and effectively How can we improve: ___________________________ ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4	Potential opportunities for improvement are recognized How can we improve: ___________________________ ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5	Relationship with all stakeholders How can we improve: ___________________________ ____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
	Total satisfaction level (sum 1-5):	_________

What, if anything, caused a change in your rating for this month: ____________________
____

Number of disputes resolved this month at the job level: ______

Number of times Issue Resolution Ladder used: _______

No. of project improvements this month (quality, value engineering, schedule, etc) _____

Please feel free to comment on the partnering process: ____________________________
____
____

* ***Caltrans – Partnering – Our Way of Doing Business.*** (2000), California Department of Transportation

B-II. Tri-Party Debriefing Meeting Agenda

Alberta
TRANSPORTATION

TRI-PARTY DEBRIEFING MEETING AGENDA

Project: ______________ Contract No: ________________ Contractor: _____________

Consultant: ________________ Alberta Transportation: _______________

Date: _________________ Time: _____________ Location: _______________________

Distribution: Consultant, Contractor, Alberta Transportation Project Sponsor, Alberta Transportation Professional Services

1. Introduction
2. Traffic Accommodation & Safety
3. Project Team Effectiveness
4. Partnering – Review the partnering relationship by using an evaluation tool, including the Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring tools included in Appendix B:
    - Successful Partnerships Checklist
    - Partnering Relationship Review
    - Monthly Project Partnering Evaluation Survey
5. Alberta Transportation, Consultant and Contractor Staff Relationships
6. Communications (***Note - #5 & #6 may be included in the Partnering Evaluation and Monitoring tool used on the project***)
7. Contract Quantities and Special Provisions
8. Contract Administration
9. Workmanship
10. Quality Control and Quality Assurance
11. Environmental Issues
12. Other

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR DEVELOPING REGIONAL CHARTERS

Sample Partnering Charter

In the spirit of the 2005 Tri-Party Partnership Charter, the Southern Region partners are committed to the successful delivery of the 2006/07 construction program. This will be achieved by working in a co-operative and adaptive environment.

Our values include:

- **Enhancing safety**
- **Preserving the environment**
- **Clear, open and honest communication, and**
- **Effective and timely dispute resolution.**

At the end of the Regional Partnering Session the participants will develop a partnering charter (agreement). This agreement includes all of the principles and commitments made during the partnering session. This is not a legal document - rather, it is a personal commitment of those attending the session that throughout the upcoming construction season, they will work with the other two parties in the partnership towards ensuring the each project is a success.

The Regional Partnering Charter will become the basis for each project built within that Region. The partnering charter can be displayed at the jobsite for the crews to see. It should be a symbol and reminder of the commitment you have made that each project will be a true partnership. The Charter can be pointed out to parties **not** adhering to the principles and commitments at any time during a project, including at meetings.

Elements of the Charter
The Regional Partnering Charter may include the following elements:

Mission/Vision
The overall commitment to the successful delivery of the Region's upcoming season's construction program. Typical examples include:

- "Through partnering, the Regional Partners are committed to enhancing our ability to perform and achieve common goals by increasing the effectiveness of our working relationships."
- "The Regional Partners are committed to work together in a cooperative and adaptive environment through the fulfillment of the following Values and Goals:"

Common Values
Partnering participants often identify common values that, if present on projects, will help to achieve the mission/vision for the projects. Some examples include:

- Mutual respect and trust
- Understanding of all parties' needs
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Listening
- Information sharing at all levels
- Win-win mentality
- Cooperation
- Innovation
- Taking responsibility

Common Goals
There are a number of common values or goals that partnering participants often considered desirable on all projects and often are included in charters. Some examples include:

Goal Category	Sample Statement
Safety	We will enhance safety for all participants
Time	We will complete the projects on time or ahead of schedule
Budget	We will manage costs and work together to strive to complete the projects within budgets
Environment	We will respect and preserve the environment
Issue Resolution	We will diligently use our Issue Resolution Ladder
Communication	We will have open, honest, and clear communication at all times.
Quality	We will construct the projects to achieve the highest possible quality
Profitability	We will work together so that the consultant and the contractor will make a reasonable profit
Team-building	We will develop a true team spirit characterized by respect, trust, and collaboration
Working with the public	We will minimize impact to the traveling public
Have fun	We will strive to have some fun on our projects

APPENDIX D

PREPARING FOR REGIONAL PARTNERING SESSIONS

Preparing for the Session
The Regional Director and the facilitator should meet to discuss and prepare for the Regional Partnering Session. This will usually require more than one meeting before the partnering workshop. With the facilitator's assistance, a list of key attendees will be developed, making sure that the session date(s) work for the key participants – at which time the date is finalized and written invitations are issued.

The success of the Regional Partnering Sessions will depend largely on who attends the sessions. The invitations should include the objectives of the session, and an explanation of the organizational levels of individuals who should attend the session. A draft agenda should also be included. The key participants should be encouraged to invite the appropriate people from their organizations, and to supply names to the facilitator not less than 14 days prior to the session date.

It is important that participants have ample time to schedule their and their staffs' attendance for the partnering session. To give enough time, the initial invitations should be sent to the key attendees not less than 30 days prior to the session. This gives the stakeholders approximately two weeks to arrange for the appropriate staff members to attend the session, and to respond within 14 days of the session.

To get maximum benefit from the Regional Partnering Sessions, including the ability to effectively participate in group work, the maximum number of attendees at each Regional Partnering Sessions should ideally not exceed 40 individuals. If more than 40 people register, consideration should be given to holding additional sessions. By requiring the invitees to provide their attendee lists 14 days prior to the session, the attendance levels will be known and additional sessions can be scheduled if necessary.

Times
The session should begin with a continental breakfast at 8:00 a.m., with the actual session starting at 8:30 a.m... Lunch should be served in the room, and be not longer than 45 minutes. The session should be scheduled for completion at 4:00 p.m...

Preparation
Representatives from TRANS, the CEA, and the ARHCA will ideally give opening remarks at the session. Experience has shown that preparation is key to launching a successful partnering session. The representatives giving the opening remarks should consider bringing any information that will assist with the session, including charts, graphs, photos, graphics, and anything else that they feel will help them explain the upcoming season.

It is anticipated that the three parties will share the costs of the Regional Partnering Sessions.

APPENDIX E

TOOLS TO ASSIST IN MAKING PARTNERSHIPs A SUCCESS*

Weekly Meetings

A weekly project meeting can be one of the best partnering tools. Good communications and planning are critical to a successful project. A well-planned and run weekly progress meeting provides the team with an opportunity to bring up issues, concerns, and ideas on a regular basis. A weekly project meeting can help everyone working on the job understand the schedule, coordinate work, and to identify and resolve issues by bringing everyone together involved in one place, at the same time, to discuss the status of the project and to plan the week ahead. A good meeting has these attributes:

It starts on time - A project meeting should always start on time - this will train everyone to be on time. If the meeting is set for 9:00am, then that is when it should start. If you get in the habit of starting ten or fifteen minutes late, everyone will arrive ten or fifteen minutes late because those who come on time are penalized.

It ends on time - There should be a set amount of time allotted for the meeting. If the meeting is set for 45 minutes, then it ends in 45 minutes. Any issues not discussed or resolved are held over to the next meeting or worked on outside of the meeting.

There is an agenda - The Consultant's and the Contractor's on-site supervisors should put together the agenda. The agenda should include any issues from the subcontractors, suppliers, and other third parties with issues. The agenda, while fixed, should have enough flexibility to discuss new issues as they occur. As well, the agenda must not "lose" old issues that are still open. A good agenda covers

- The schedule (what work is planned) and how you, as a team, are going to accomplish it over the next week
- Unresolved or outstanding issues - so that you can either resolve them or elevate them up the Issue Resolution Ladder
- New issues which need resolution

If you have a stubborn or particularly complex issue, you may need to set up a separate meeting for its resolution.

A record is made of agreements and outstanding issues (minutes) - Some type of meeting minutes are required so that everyone knows what was agreed to and what is still unresolved (the minutes may be very helpful in the future should questions or issues arise). Minute taking is best done as a shared effort (responsibility alternating between Consultant and Contractor). It isn't necessary to do "formal" minutes, just be sure to record agreements and outstanding issues. The minutes do need to be distributed to the entire project team - this is your best form of communication project wide. Many projects use email to distribute their minutes.

The people needed for discussion and to make decisions are there – In order to have an effective meeting the people affected by the meeting must be present. It is frustrating to everyone if the people involved in an issue under discussion are not there; this wastes the time of those present. It is the Consultant's and the Contractor's on-site supervisors' responsibility to ensure that the appropriate people are invited to the meeting and that they show up.

Attention is on the meeting, not elsewhere – Interruptions from cell phones and BlackBerries distract everyone, making the meeting drag on, and preventing everyone from hearing everything (discussions and agreements). When you're at the weekly project meeting, keep your attention there. If everyone stays focused on the meeting it can start on time and end on time.

Another good idea to facilitate communication is for the project superintendent and inspector to meet before the start of each shift to discuss the work planned for the day. They'll be able to agree on an approach and to discuss potential problems.

Communication

Good communication means that there are no surprises on your project. It means that one day you won't open a letter to find that someone is upset about something that you have never heard of before. The project team should commit to not writing letters without talking to each other first. Talking first gives everyone an opportunity to make sure they understand the issue(s) and to try to work things out before positions are put in writing. If you do end up putting your position in writing, the recipient should know that the letter is coming and what it says.

Technology is offering field teams diverse ways of communicating (email, web sites, etc.). If possible, try adapting your projects to take advantage of these technologies.

Experts tell us that 75-80% of good communication is listening – so if you want to improve communications on your project, listen, listen, listen.

Personality Conflicts

Personality conflicts can get in the way of communications and can disrupt the project. Each person on the project brings a unique personality, and some accommodation should be made for these differences. Egos and personalities are present on every project - however, project issues should remain project issues and not become personal issues.

Separating People from the Problem

Often, when conflict erupts on projects, people begin to look for who is to blame. It is easy to get caught up in the "fight", and in "winning", and not in getting the issue resolved while ensuring that relationships remain undamaged. It is important to remember that everyone will still have to work together to complete the project.

Because people sometimes become engaged in the fight over "winning" (and especially in not losing), they often don't take the time to really understand the problem - they make assumptions. Frequently the assumptions turn out to be only partially correct. They then find that they can't come up with a good solution (or even a good "blaming") because they are working with false assumptions.

Following are steps that can be taken to avoid being trapped in this vicious cycle:

Step #1 Seek to Understand the Problem

Ask probing questions to try to determine all aspects of the problem - no matter how angry or hostile the other parties seem to be. Don't become defensive; you are trying to understand the problem and the assumptions each of the other stakeholders have. This will give you a clearer picture of what the real issues are.

Step #2 Don’t Make It Personal

Take an objective point of view - don't become engaged in the battle. Take the role of negotiator or fact finder. The more people get wrapped up in the battle and in trying to win, the more likely they are to start feeling that the issue is a personal matter. But remember, it's a project issue, and your success will depend on your ability to not take things personally.

Step #3 Don’t Seek to Blame

Don't seek to blame - instead, seek solutions and understanding. People generally act logically; your job is to find the logic behind their actions. It is almost always there, and often has nothing to do with the stated problem. Pointing fingers makes everyone defensive, stopping communication. Project problems are never solved by blaming someone. Everyone is in this project together - everyone will succeed or fail together.

Step #4 Agree on the Problem

Work to gain agreement on what the problem is before you attempt to find solutions. If people don’t agree on exactly what the problem is, it is not possible to reach the best solution.

These four steps will go a long way to having productive problem solving on construction projects.

Follow-up Partnering Session(s)

Partnering requires an on-going commitment. Sometimes the best way to renew a failing commitment is to hold a partnering session midway into the project. Other times you might consider holding a follow-up partnering session are when there is a significant change of personnel on the project, issues remain unresolved, or the project enters a new phase of work. Holding a follow-up partnering workshop will help to keep your partnership strong and your project on track, or even turn around a project that is starting to “go sideways”.

Team Building Activities

Construction projects, like any other work, usually don’t go well when the people working on them dislike coming to work. People can’t find solutions to problems when they’re stressed and fearful. It is important to the success of the project that project personnel have a sense of enjoyment. Such a sense can be achieved by holding regular joint team events or celebrations.

* Reference - Caltrans **– *Partnering – Our Way of Doing Business.*** (2000), California Department of Transportation

REFERENCES AND SOURCES

Caltrans – Partnering – Our Way of Doing Business. (2000), California Department of Transportation, written by Sue Dyer, MBA, President, *Orgmetrics*, Livermore, CA

Partner Your Project. (1997).Dyer, Sue. *Pendulum Publishing, Livermore CA*

Partnering: Changing Attitudes in Construction. (1995**)** Washington, D.C.: The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC)

Partnering: A Concept for Success. (1991) Alexandria, VA.: The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC)

In Search of Partnering Excellence. (1991) Bureau of Engineering Research, The University of Texas at Austin: Construction Industry Institute (CII)

The Partnering Guide. (1995) Ottawa, ON.: The Department of National Defence and Defence Construction Canada

ODOT Partnering Handbook. (2000) Brown, Donna K., Ph.D.., Ohio Department of Transportation

CDOT Partnering Guidelines. (2006), Colorado Department of Transportation

KCA/KDOT Partnering Program. Kansas Department of Transportation and Kansas Construction Association

Partnering for Success – Second Edition. U.S. Army Material Command, Alexandria, VA

Journal of Management Engineering. March/April 1995

Partnering in Construction. (1999)Carr, Frank, and Hurtado, Kim, and Lancaster, Charles, and Markert, Charles, and Tucker, Paul.. *Forum on the Construction Industry – American Bar Association*

This *Partnering Guidelines Manual* written by Allan Lowe, President – Allan Lowe & Associates Inc. Ph. 780-984-6676