

Iowa Transportation Research Collaboration Business Plan

Preamble: Research to be investigated by the Collaboration parties and the focus groups will include both topics likely to be funded through traditional funding sources and those topics without current identified funding sources.

The purpose of this business plan is to define the structure for identifying transportation research strategic to the state of Iowa and providing guidance for implementation of the Iowa Transportation Research Collaboration Agreement (April 9, 2003).

The objectives of the business plan are:

1. The universities, CTRE and the DOT shall support, participate in and lead, as appropriate, various transportation research focus groups whose objective is to identify needed research initiatives for Iowa. Research would be carried out through the Iowa Highway Research Board and the Iowa DOT. The focus group meetings would address aspects of transportation such as traffic and safety, geotechnical, maintenance, pavements, construction, hydraulics and draining, roadside vegetation, structures, planning, environment, economics and finance, and transportation modes. The DOT shall provide support as appropriate to the focus group process.
2. The parties shall participate in semi-annual Collaboration Meetings to discuss identified research needs from the focus group meetings and the available research expertise and facilities. A review of what has been accomplished to date and what is planned for the future as a result of this agreement, will be included in these meetings. The meetings shall be held on a rotating basis at the DOT and university locations.
3. The parties shall reasonably collaborate and support each other on initiatives undertaken independently with sponsors beyond Iowa, such as the National Science Foundation, National Cooperative Highway research Program (NCHRP), Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Science, the U.S. Department of Transportation and other states. The Iowa DOT shall make its facilities available, as appropriate, for such sponsored research as may relate to the DOT's responsibilities.

I. Parameters of Operation

1. Parameters for Focus Group meetings:

- Focus groups will meet when the Iowa DOT determines that a meeting should be held; based on needs, priorities and availability of research funds. Interested individuals/agencies may make recommendations to the Iowa DOT for additional focus group meetings to be held. The DOT will administer the focus group meetings.
- The Iowa DOT will establish a list of standing and ad hoc focus groups that will meet as needed. A list of these groups is attached as Attachment A.
- The Iowa DOT will forward focus group reports to the partners and other interested parties. A template for the conduct of standing focus groups is attached as Attachment B.
- The Iowa DOT will maintain lists of focus group participants.
- Focus groups will:
 - Have a team leader designated by the Iowa DOT. The team leader may or may not be an Iowa DOT employee, will make the arrangements for and will run the meeting.
 - Have the participants determined by the Iowa DOT in coordination with the team leader.
 - Meet as often as deemed necessary by the Iowa DOT.

2. Parameters for Collaboration Meetings:

- Membership includes appropriate research representatives from Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT), University of Northern Iowa, University of Iowa, Iowa State University and the Center for Transportation Research and Education.
- Collaboration meetings will be held twice a year, as a minimum.
- Meetings will rotate between Iowa City, Cedar Falls and Ames.
- Meetings will generally be scheduled from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.
- A working lunch will be provided by the hosting agency

- Iowa DOT Research and Technology Bureau will set the meeting dates and develop a draft agenda
- Draft agendas will be distributed to partners in advance of the meeting
- The Collaboration meetings will be chaired by the DOT's Director of Research & Technology Bureau
- The Collaboration meetings will include the following six items:
 - Review the focus group recommendations
 - DOT comments on focus group recommendations
 - Revise and refine research ideas
 - Discuss other new ideas for research opportunities.
 - Discuss, identify, and pursue funding sources/mechanisms for identified research
 - Strategies for accomplishing desired research; i.e. RFP or identify lead person to pursue the strategic topics—attempt to identify a research team, or recommend an RFP, or write a proposal.

3. Parameters to pursue national research opportunities.

- DOT's Director of Research & Technology Bureau will work with the Collaboration Agreement partners to pursue initiatives to respond to state, regional, industry and national funding opportunities on needed research as identified through focus groups and collaboration meetings.