

Idaho Transportation Department

Partnering for Construction Project Success



**Your Safety • Your Mobility
Your Economic Opportunity**

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What is Partnering?

Partnering is a commitment by at least two parties (e.g., ITD and the Contractor) to utilize teamwork and foster positive relationships to ensure a successful construction project. A successful construction project is one that is defined as being delivered with zero accidents, with high quality, on time, on budget, and profitable.

It takes the entire construction project team to put forth the effort to work together, to seek input from each other to find the best solution to the problems and issues at hand to ensure a successful construction project.

There is also a commitment to address and resolve issues and problems promptly and at the lowest level possible. Partnering does not guarantee that all issues will be resolved; there will be times that a resolution does not occur at the lowest level. This is not a failure of partnering, but the key reason to follow all the partnering steps outlined herein.

Why Partner?

The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) does not build our highways and bridges; Contractors do. ITD is the contract administrator for the work to ensure the work is done in accordance with the contract terms. ITD has a vested interest in ensuring Contractors are also successful because without successful contractors, ITD could not deliver on its commitments to the traveling public.

Nearly every construction project has issues to work through and having a highly functioning, collaborative team working on the solutions is beneficial to everyone. Ultimately, it is a team approach to help ensure everyone has success.

Objectives of Partnering

Partnering continues to be used more often in the public sector to help achieve the following objectives:

Safer projects	Claims avoided
Lower total project costs	Reduced delays
Higher quality	Issues resolved promptly
Increased job satisfaction	Profitable project
Building long-term relationships	Ensuring Contractor's Success

When to Partner?

Every time.

What Level of Partnering Should I Choose?

For ITD, there are two levels of partnering: Formal and Informal.

Formal Partnering: For projects that are larger, longer, more complicated, and that will be most disruptive to the traveling public. These partnering efforts will be led by an external partnering facilitator and will require significant participation from ITD and the Contractor.

Informal Partnering: For projects that are more routine, less complicated, shorter in duration, and less disruptive to the traveling public. Informal partnering will be led by a Department partnering facilitator.

Kick-off Meeting

Regardless of the level of partnering selected, a kick-off meeting must occur. For formal partnering, this meeting will be completely separate from the pre-construction meeting whereas the informal partnering effort may have the kickoff meeting as a precursor to the pre-construction meeting.

A kickoff meeting must address the following information:

- Charter (mission, goals, and guidelines)
- Communication plan (e.g., frequency, methods)
- How will issues be resolved? (e.g., steps, escalation)
- How will success be measured? (e.g., partnering in excellence award)
- If a DRB is utilized as well, how will the DRB be utilized?
- Contact information
- Action plans

Interim Partnering Meetings

Throughout the duration of the project, interim partnering meetings will be held. The communication plan established during the kick-off meeting will help determine the frequency of partnering meetings, the methods for communication, and how the information is distributed. Each project will vary, but some considerations are:

- Daily “stand-up/huddle” meetings the first thing every morning between the Inspector(s) and the Contractor
- Regular meetings (e.g., weekly, bi-monthly, monthly)
- Each meeting will be documented with the issues under review, the issues that have been resolved, and the agreements made.
- Additional partnering meetings may be necessary if there has been significant personnel changes, unresolved issues, or when the project is entering a new phase.
- Team building activities could include sharing a meal together, doing public services as a team, or spending time doing activities to relate to one another on a personal level.

Close-Out Partnering Meeting

A close-out partnering meeting is required. At the end of each project, the team will meet to discuss lessons learned, examine ways in which the next project could be improved, and take time to celebrate project successes. With continuous improvement as a focal point, take time to forward suggestions to improve specifications, manuals, and guidance documents on to the appropriate ITD contact.

This is also a perfect time to apply for an excellence in partnering award, review the application, and to begin creating the application content while the project details are still fresh in the team member's minds.

Escalation/Issue Resolution Ladder

What is a Dispute?

A dispute is a disagreement that continues for a given period of time without any movement toward a solution; the parties are at an impasse. In essence, the disagreement has reached a point where the parties "agree to disagree".

When a dispute arises, the partners will meet to detail the issue to allow the issue to be escalated.

Escalation of an Issue

A successful partnering program has an escalation ladder which is created to get beyond the dispute impasse. The escalation process will be discussed at the kick-off meeting.

If the issue regards a subcontractor issue, the subcontractor is required to attend with the Contractor throughout the escalation process.

Each party to a dispute must understand the other side's position well enough to be able to explain it to the other party's satisfaction. This starts at the lowest level and works its way up the escalation process.

An issue is escalated to the next higher level when an agreement cannot be reached at the current level and within the agreed-upon timeline, if the agreed-upon time has been exceeded without resolution, or by request of one or both of the parties at the current level (after first informing the other party).

Level	Days*	ITD	Contractor
1	1	Project Manager/Inspector	Superintendent/Project Manager
2	3	Design Construction Engineer	Construction Manager/Project Manager
3	7	District Engineer	Owner or General Manager

* Recommend time durations. Number of days can be adjusted as determined in the kick-off meeting or as mutually agreed otherwise throughout the project.

ITD/AGC Excellence in Partnering Awards

Recognizing and awarding successful partnering construction projects is important and will promote the culture of partnering throughout Idaho. The annual ITD/AGC Excellence in Partnering awards is one way we are recognizing the important efforts in Partnering. Award application and submittal process information can be found at this link <https://itd.idaho.gov/itd/?target=excellence-awards>.