Developing Effective GDOT Research Need Statements

David M. Jared, P.E.
djared@dot.ga.gov
Talking Points

Research Need Statement...

- Significance
- Composition
- Optimization
- Submittal
- Approval
- Questions
RNS: Significance

• Basic means of initiating GDOT research
  – Required for all core GDOT research projects
  – Required for both external and internal partners

• Basic means of communicating research need
  – Communication piece for GDOT decision-makers
    • Sponsoring office(s) [end-users]
    • Funding review groups [RTAG’s]
    • Executive management

  – Should be written with all of these groups in mind
    • Clear statements of need, novelty, approach, and benefits
    • Comprehensible by general transportation audience
RNS: Composition

- Title
- Problem statement
- Literature search
- Research objective
- Implementation prospects
- Research significance
- Project duration
- Cost estimate
RNS: Composition (II)

- Statement developer(s)
- Investigator(s)
- Agency (i.e. institution)
- Date of submittal
- GDOT office(s) supporting
- Technical/implementation manager
- References
- Confidentiality statement
RNS: Optimization

• Things to Emphasize
  – Understanding of research need or problem to be solved
  – Clear project objectives
  – Implementation prospects
    • Per your understanding, if objectives are reached
    • Low- or high-risk research?
  – Significance of research to GDOT
    • Explicit statement of final product and its use(s)
    • Realistic B/C ratio
Things to Avoid

− Poor editing, proofreading, and formatting
− Writing a book
− Cursory literature search; full-blown literature review
− Big budgets for first projects
− Unrealistic schedules (think float)
− Promising the moon
− Criticism of GDOT (think win-win)
RNS: Submittal

- One general RNS solicitation per year
  - Mid-August to mid-September
  - Preliminary discussion with GDOT sponsor(s) encouraged

- Upload to GTI portal (site)

- Confidentiality
  - Intellectual property is highly respected…
  - RNS review limited to relevant GDOT staff
RNS: Approval

• Sponsoring office(s) head(s)

• Research Technical Advisory Groups (RTAG’s)
  – Funding review groups
  – Aligned with GDOT strategic goals
  – Research staff decide which RTAG reviews RNS

• Research Advisory Committee
  – Chief Engineer and Division Directors
  – Normally review RTAG recommendations in February
  – Majority vote

• Announcement of projects selected for funding
  – Follow-up enquiries are acceptable
KEEP CALM AND ASK QUESTIONS
thank you