CE 341: Some Issues in Proposals

Overview

The pages that follow focus on three critical sections of your proposals:

- Project Objectives
- Project Design
- Key Participants

On each page you will find an example that works well and another example that is not as strong. Comment boxes offer some insight as to why. By reviewing these examples (along with the advice table) before writing your proposals, you stand a better chance of success

The Project Objectives

Weak

The major project objectives for this proposal will take into The major project objectives for this proposal will take into account the concerns of MDOT. Which are to provide a level of service of C or better and to enhance the traffic operations and safety at the intersection. First, the assessments of the existing four-way stop with respect to the present and projected increases of vehicle and pedestrian volumes will enable courses of action to de determined. Data involving the current level of service and operations will then be compared to the desired values taking the expected growth into account.

Better

- Evaluate the current status of the Birch and Wilson intersection and determine the quality of operations.
- Estimate the increase in traffic and pedestrian volume and then analyze the intersection and determine the quality of operations and safety for the expected increase.
- Determine the major problems with the expected increase the safety of both motorists and pedestrians, improve traffic flow, and maintain a Level of Service of C or better. Possible solutions would be to make the intersection perpendicular, to construct a traffic circle, or have a signalized intersection

Better Yet (excerpt)

- Suggest two methods of design and control to handle the increase in demand of traffic operations at the intersection.
- Recommend the best method for handling the increase in demand of traffic operation at the intersection.

The method chosen for use will be determined based on cost, ease of implementation (installing a signal vs. increasing the number of lanes) and level of service. The level of service for traffic volumes in 2010 will be a C or better.

Notice how the better objectives consist of specific wording that a reader could use to evaluate whether the proposal will address the problem at hand. That same quality also helps the proposal writers knit the methodology, project design and work plan into a proposal with a consistent focus

The Project Design

Sort of okay but could be a whole lot more organized and precise. (a good path to a 'C")

Project Design

Evaluate he current performance of the intersection.

The first order of business is to contact the Department of Police and Public Safety and retrieve any data relating to accidents or traffic violations in the last six months and to find an approximate traffic volume of the intersection. If no data is available, it will be collected and compiled by the group through the use of traffic counters, manual and machine. With this, the theoretical traffic flow, capacity, and the LOS of the intersection can be calculated.

Evaluate the future performance with the projected increase.

With the use of a computer program, the projected increase in volume can be estimated and the capacity and the LOS can then be found. Then using the same increase in volumes, other types of intersections, such as a traffic circle, perpendicular intersection or even a signalized intersection would be evaluated on the basis of safety and operations. The one with the best results, while retaining a LOS of C or better, would be chosen for construction.

The team on the right has produced a design with the valuable structure of phases and tasks. They also avoid some of the ponderous passive voice constructions that appear in the design above.

Far better (better path to an "A")

Project Design

In order to evaluate the effects of growth at the intersection of Birch and Wilson roads, this project will consist of the three phases outlined below.

Phase 1—Collecting Data

Task 1.1 Conduct a general evaluation of the intersection noting the following parameters: number of lanes, number of stop signs, types of pedestrian facilities, and special activities such as construction.

Task 1.2 Record the volume of traffic for left, right, and through traffic—as well as pedestrian traffic. To obtain accurate volumes, multiple observations will be done at multiple times.

Phase 2—Evaluating Data

Task 2.1 Identify the level of service for the current status of the intersection.

Task 2.2 Using simulation software, determine the level of service at the desired amount of increased volume and without changes to the intersection.

Task 2.3 Using modeling software, create two designs for the intersection, each of which preserves LOS of C or better. Select the plan that best accommodates forecast changes to the intersection.

Phase 3—Reporting Findings

Task 3.1 Prepare and submit draft report of findings.

Key Participants

Sort of Okay

Key Participants

The following are the key participants of our company who will be working on this project.

Keith Kowalkowski performed well in statistics. He will be good for developing numbers in the analysis of the intersection.

Jaeyoung Kim knows traffic laws from many countries. He will help to apply traffic laws to the project.

Karianne Johnson has worked with road redesign and reconstruction projects. She will be able to input her knowledge for the future recommendations.

Michael Kamlay has worked with construction and data collection in the past. He will be of great use in the collection of current traffic data.

The team on the right has given more structure and detail. That helps readers quickly assess a team's capabilities. The summary paragraphs work well.

Much Better

Key Participants

Mathew Bamm

Education: Jackson Norhwest High School. 1994-1997
Michigan State University, College of Engineering, 1997-present

Work Experience: Superior Production Welding. Jackson, MI. 1999.
Michigan Dept. of Transportation. Jackson, MI. 2000.
Engineering & Environmental Services Group, Lansing, MI. 2000-present

Mr. Bamm has spent one summer with MDOT invilved in inspection and surveying along a two-mile section of US-12 in Jonesville, MI. He has had experience in concrete materials testing for EESG and has done some design work for them as well.

Nicholas V. Brandt

Education: Bay City Western High School, 1994-1997
Delta Community College, Pre-Engineering, 1997-Spring 2000
Michigan State University, College of Engineering, Spring 2000-present

Work Experience: Owens Cabinets, Midland MI 2000
United Parcel Service, Lansing MI 2000-present

Mr. Brandt has had experience in cabinet design with the use of Auto-Cad. He had also had experience in various organizational distribution of goods.