



Utility Coordination for Municipalities

Natalie Parks, PE
USI Consultants

Nick Parr
Boone County Highway Department



USI Consultants, Inc.

@USIConsultants

www.usiconsultants.com

What are the TOP 3 challenges with utilities on locally funded projects?
Use the QR code or link below to answer.

Go to **www.menti.com** and
use the code **2156 2041**



<https://www.mentimeter.com/s/fc1a3e57cffa2b1e5ae65884424d478/e37149f50189>



INTRODUCTION

- Municipalities are required by law (IC 36-9-42-9) to allow utility companies to place their facilities within public right-of-way
- How do municipalities manage utilities located within their right-of-way?
- How do municipalities work with utility owners when a relocation is required?
- What challenges are inherent in utility coordination of locally funded projects?

INTRODUCTION

- 105 IAC 13
 - 105 IAC 13-1-2 Applicability – improvement projects as defined in 105 IAC 13-2-10
 - 105 IAC 13-2-10 “Improvement project’ means the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and process incidental to building, fabricating, or bettering any of the following:
 - (1) A state, United States, or interstate route
 - (2) Projects within the state parks or other roadways the department is required by statute to build and maintain
 - (3) A local project administered by the Department
 - (4) A project on the state highway system administered by a local authority”

INTRODUCTION

- Codes pertaining to municipalities & utilities
 - IC 8-1-2-101: Municipal regulations; county executive's power; relocation of facilities
 - IC 8-20-1-28: Public and municipally owned utilities; poles, facilities, appliances, and fixtures
 - IC 36-9-42: Utility Relocations

WHAT WE KNOW

- Utilities, by law, are permitted to use municipal right-of-way
- Municipalities and counties are permitted, by law, to develop ordinances controlling how the right-of-way is used by utilities
- INDOT's process works
- Utility coordination is a partnership between utility-owner-designer-contractor

UNOFFICIAL SURVEY

- Question 1: What are the top 3 struggles you have with utilities on locally funded projects?
 - Responding in a timely manner
 - Following the approved work plan in location & relocation time
 - Cost

UNOFFICIAL SURVEY

- Question 2: What are the top 3 challenges with a utility coordination process on locally funded projects?
 - **Utility coordinators not staying on through construction**
 - Utility coordination timeline
 - Responses
 - No incentive for compliance
 - Not accounting for constructability conflicts
 - Individual doing the coordination is not a dedicated utility coordinator
 - Lack of inspection of relocated facilities

UNOFFICIAL SURVEY

- Question 3: What does successful utility coordination look like?
 - No unnecessary added costs or delays
 - No Contractor calls saying “there’s a utility in our way”
 - Relocation matches work plan – location, time, cost
 - Utility coordination ongoing after design
 - Timely delivery and approval of work plans & issuing NTP
 - Open communication
 - Designated utility coordinators
 - Relationships with utilities
 - Minimize conflicts in design
 - Relocations completed prior to CN with utility on-call during CN to verify retired/active facilities

UNOFFICIAL SURVEY

- Question 4: What is important to you in a utility coordinator?
 - **Communication**
 - **Take ownership of the entire project**
 - Project understanding
 - Understanding what the client is looking for
 - Persistence
 - Reviews constructability issues
 - Follow through

UNOFFICIAL SURVEY

- Other challenges
 - NEW builds, specifically broadband
 - No way of penalizing unresponsive or problematic utilities
 - Utility coordination is not static

UC PROCESS ON LOCALLY FUNDED PROJECTS

- Process defined by 105 IAC 15 is *specific to federally funded projects or projects let by INDOT*
- INDOT process works
- Modify INDOT process for locally funded projects
 - Use the same forms but remove the code references
 - Modify the response times as needed to match the project schedule
 - Determine who signs the work plan – consultant PM or client PM?

SCOPING MEETINGS

- Existing utility information
- Anticipated and/or estimated relocation times
- Expectations of utility coordinator
- Who will be handling the utility coordination?
 - Project PM vs Dedicated Utility Coordinator
- Project timeline
- Funding source

EXPECTATIONS OF UTILITY COORDINATORS

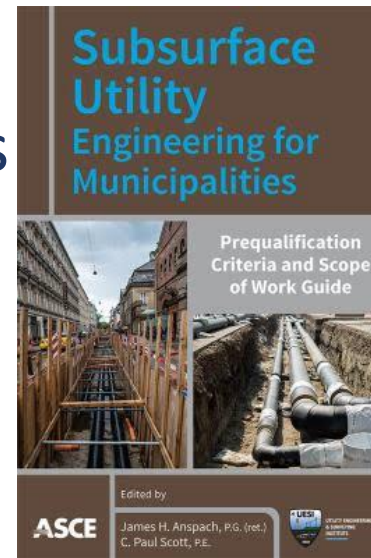
- Involved from “cradle to grave”
- Communication expectations
 - Cost Increases
 - Delays
 - Regular updates/reports necessary
- Constructability reviews
 - Equipment requirements
 - Relocation timing

ENVIRONMENTAL & RIGHT-OF-WAY

- Environmental permitting requirements
- Right-of-way clearing – what does this mean?
- Environmental restrictions
 - Bat habitats
 - Fish spawning
- Delays due to permitting challenges

SUE

- Why do you use SUE?
- When should SUE be conducted?
- Should you use SUE during construction?
- Subsurface Utility Engineering for Municipalities



HANDLING CHALLENGING UTILITIES

- Partnerships
- Contacting community relations personnel
- Document, document, document
- Communication from project onset

CHALLENGING TIMES AHEAD

- Material lead times
- Personnel/Contractor scheduling
- Right-of-way Clearing
- Environmental Permitting
- Existing utilities remaining in place
- New utilities installed after project start

ISSUING NTP

- Who should sign the Utility NTP?
- What is the relocation start date?
 - Is the actual relocation start dependent on anything?
- What is the impact to the construction schedule?
- How do you manage the relocation time and the construction schedule?

LESSONS LEARNED

- Replaced a concrete structure with a CMP
- Performed SUE to verify horizontal and vertical location of relocated facility
- Replaced structure without utility conflicts and with minimal right-of-way



LESSONS LEARNED

- Replacing existing bridge with a new bridge
- Communication line shown NOT included in design plans
- Project scoping did not reveal any utilities on the project site
- Consider hourly utility coordination on every project



LESSONS LEARNED

- Bridge replacement project
- Right-of-way clearing required
- Project owner cleared trees within the construction limits as requested by utility
- Utility refused to start relocation due to branches from adjacent R/W



A blue-tinted photograph of a power line tower and other utility structures against a clear sky. The image features several high-voltage transmission towers and a smaller utility pole with cross-arms, all silhouetted against a bright blue sky. The foreground shows some green foliage and a misty or hazy ground level. The overall scene is a typical utility landscape.

QUESTIONS???

CONTACT INFORMATION

Natalie Parks

USI Consultants

nparks@usiconsultants.com

317.526.9045

Nick Parr

Boone County Highway Department

Nparr@co.boone.in.us

765.482.4550



TRANSITION PAGE