



Sunset Road Issue Resolution Ladder

Resolving Construction Project Issues

Problem solving and issue resolution are two of the most critical elements in the partnering process. Commitment to the proper use of the issue resolution process is vital to the success of the partnership. Mentoring and monitoring the process at every level require this commitment be held from the very top of each stakeholder's organization. When administered correctly, the issue resolution process can minimize stress, create empowerment, build and strengthen relationships and maximize program delivery.

Effective problem solving should focus on learning as much about the issue as possible, which includes getting information from PCDOT, the designers, Borderland, the subcontractors, and other key stakeholders. Issue resolution should be used as an opportunity to educate one another. Once mutual understanding is obtained, it is important to look for ways to meet the needs of all parties through a common solution. Timely resolution of issues is critical. The longer an issue remains unresolved, the greater the potential for negative impact on the project.

When issues arise, individuals on the first level of the Issue Resolution Ladder are responsible for documenting and agreeing on the details of the issue. Once that has been accomplished the parties need to follow the Issue Resolution Steps shown on the next page to try to come to a resolution. The parties will work together to document all of the facts regarding the issue and their proposed resolution. If they are able to come to an agreement but do not have the authority to finalize the agreement, they will still document everything so the next level has the information needed to finalize the agreement. It is not acceptable to escalate an issue without completing all of the fact finding and research.

Issue Resolution Ladder

Level	Pima County	Borderland	Time for information gathering	Time for Decision*
Field	Inspector	Project Superintendent Bridge Concrete Supervisor	Immediately By cell phone	Same day – face to face
Engineer/Project Manager Traffic Inspector	Manager,	Exec. Vice President Bridge	One working day	Two working days
Management	Division Manager	Exec. Vice President	One working day	Two days
Senior Management	Deputy Director	President	One week (work days)	One week (work days)

*Time starts when both parties have all the information necessary to make a decision.



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Issue Resolution Steps

1. Identify and clarify the issue.

- Be open and honest.
- Document the issue.

2. Gather the facts.

- Deal in facts and focus on the issue.
- Separate technical issues from policy and business issues.
- Maintain the original definition throughout the escalation process.
- Seek advice from more experienced personnel to problem solve.

3. Determine who needs to be involved.

4. Schedule a meeting to assure uninterrupted time when meeting.

5. Communicate the issue to and ask input from those involved.

- Clearly understand the various levels of authority of other team members.

6. Brainstorm resolutions and prioritize.

- Do not let personalities interfere; avoid blame.
- Look at the issue from the other person's point of view to better understand his/her perspective.

7. Decide on resolution at the operations level.

- Reach an agreement or escalate the issue.
- Do not skip levels on the Issue Resolution Ladder.

8. Record agreements and action items.

- Use proper forms.

9. Use Issue Resolution levels as needed.

- Honor the time pledges committed to during the partnering workshop.
- Key players may agree to modify time pledges if needed to avoid impacts to the project.
- If you can't agree, then agree to disagree and escalate together.

10. Bring final decision back to all those involved.

- Communicate in writing, the rationale (technical, policy or business) behind the resolution.