

Design Delegation Agreement

between

HQ Division of Design

and

District 4

January 30, 2015

Design Delegation Agreement Approvals

District 4

Caltrans, as owner/operator of the State Highway System, has the statutory and inherent obligation to ensure that all modifications or additions to the State Highway System provide a safe, sustainable, integrated, and efficient transportation system. This stewardship agreement establishes a framework for Headquarters Division of Design and the Districts to uphold these expectations and maintains the accountability of the department's agents, leaders, and staff, for carrying out these responsibilities.

The Design Stewardship Agreement between HQ Division of Design and District 4, as outlined herein, further delegates responsibilities established by the following documents:

The Director has delegated authority to the Chief Engineer dated December 10, 2012.

The Director has delegated authority to the District 4 Director dated November 18, 2002.

The Chief Engineer has delegated authority to the HQ Division of Design Chief dated June 18, 2013.

The HQ Division of Design Chief has delegated to District Director certain approvals as prescribed in the June 7, 2013 Memorandum.

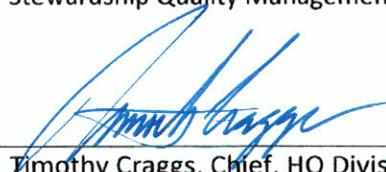
This Delegation Agreement made and entered into this 30th day of January, 2015, by and between the HQ Division of Design Chief and the District 4 Director.

District 4 requests design delegation authority for the baseline delegations described in the Baseline Design Stewardship Agreement Delegation Authority (Appendix A). The District is not seeking additional delegation authority beyond the baseline agreement at this time. The attached District 4 Stewardship Quality Management Plan, dated January 2015, describes how District 4 will manage the delegated authority.



Bijan Sartipi, District 4 Director

I, Timothy Craggs, Chief, HQ Division of Design, approve this request as described above and in the attached Stewardship Quality Management Plan.



Timothy Craggs, Chief, HQ Division of Design

District 4
Stewardship Quality Management Plan
January 2015

Prepared by:

District 4
Division of Design

Helena (Lenka) Culik-Caro
Deputy District Director, Design

Introduction

District 4's Stewardship Quality Management Plan (SQMP) describes how delegated HQ Division of Design (HQ DOD) responsibilities will be managed and outlines how District 4 will ensure successful implementation of the Stewardship Agreement. The Stewardship Agreement is a contractual document between HQ DOD and District 4 that transfers certain decision-making authority, such as approval of design exceptions, to District 4.

In accordance with the Design Delegation Agreement Plan (Appendix B), the SQMP provides the overall framework which will ensure successful delegation. It defines roles and responsibilities of those involved, outlines the organizational structure, and identifies the collaborative approach to be employed between District 4 and HQ DOD through the HQ DOD Resource Center. The SQMP assures uniform and consistent application of decisions while allowing flexibility within agreed upon conditions.

It is understood the SQMP is a living document that will be amended based on performance monitoring and outcomes. At this time, District 4 will execute the baseline Stewardship Agreement without seeking additional delegation authority. It is anticipated additional delegations will be requested in the future after the District gains experience and evaluates lessons learned from implementation of the baseline agreement.

The specific elements of District 4's SQMP are subdivided and presented individually in the following seven quality management principles:

1. Leadership
2. Strategic Plan
3. Customer Focus
4. Workforce
5. Detection
6. Issue Resolution
7. Results

1. Leadership

Upon approval of District 4's Stewardship Agreement, the District Director will further sub delegate baseline authority to the Deputy District Director, Design (DDD Design), consistent with the terms of the Stewardship Agreement. The previously delegated 2013 Mandatory Standards and Advisory Design Standards will continue to be approved by Design Office Chiefs (see Appendix A).

Exceptions to Advisory Design Standards for projects developed by Design and others, such as the Office of Maintenance and Office of Advance Planning, will be approved by their respective Office Chiefs. Exceptions to Mandatory Design Standards will be approved by either the DDD Design or the Design Office Chief, as indicated in Appendix A, regardless of the functional unit developing the project. Approval authority for all other documents transferred in the baseline Stewardship Agreement will be delegated as shown in Appendix A.

The DDD Design will appoint a qualified District Design Liaison. The role of the District Design Liaison, a Senior Transportation Engineer, will be similar to the current role of the HQ DOD Design Reviewer. The District Design Liaison will ensure design exceptions meet expected quality requirements and that approvals are supported with adequate justification. The District Design Liaison will be responsible for coordinating decisions among the projects to ensure reasonable consistency, serve as liaison between HQ DOD and the District (typically at the Office and Branch Chief level) and provide guidance in the application of flexible design concepts. Additional duties include providing guidance to staff in preparing and modifying documents such as, but not limited to, geometric approval drawings, design exception fact sheets, freeway agreements, structures general plans, and other delegated design decision documents. The District Design Liaison will also participate in appropriate meetings with HQ DOD and Project Delivery Coordinators to assure statewide consistency of delegated authority.

HQ DOD will budget travel allowance for HQ DOD Resource Center meetings with other District Design Liaisons thus maintaining statewide consistency and providing input on design policies, standards and practices. It is anticipated there will be roughly 12 to 16 meetings per year.

The District 4 Design Coordinator will monitor delegated mandatory design exceptions and provide quarterly reports to the DDD Design and HQ DOD to monitor performance. The results of this performance monitoring will be used to verify the overall quality and consistency of design exception approvals.

Consideration of mandatory design exceptions will be included in existing quality review processes within the district, including regular PDT meetings, Constructability Reviews, Risk Management Plans, Safety Reviews and Management Reviews. Findings and conclusions in support of mandatory design exceptions from these various quality reviews, with respect to the delegated authority, will be documented by the District 4 Design Coordinator in the quarterly report to the DDD Design.

Implementation of the Baseline Stewardship Agreement will have minimal impact on current District operations. Staff will be made aware of the new procedures through routine communication means such as email, project engineer meetings, and various staff and management meetings. In addition, the District Design Liaison and the HQ Design Coordinator will be available to provide guidance on implementation of the Stewardship Delegation Agreement at meetings and on an individual basis.

2. Strategic Planning

The Stewardship Agreement delegation authority is consistent with the direction of Caltrans most current strategic planning effort; to be more efficient, transparent and empowered at the district level. Upon approval of the delegation authority, the district will integrate the SQMP into the district strategic planning process with subsequent outreach and communication to all staff involved as deployment commences. The SQMP will be implemented in collaboration with the organizational leadership, customers, stakeholders and workforce to establish the action plans and objectives for measuring and monitoring the outcomes and results of the delegation process. Goals, desired outcomes, strategies, measures and results will be implemented. Performance measure results will be reported periodically by the DDD, Design and the HQ Design Coordinator. Positive results and/or improvement actions will be the basis for sustaining approval authority in collaboration with HQ DOD.

3. Customer Focus

Key stakeholders potentially impacted by the delegations include external local partners who develop transportation projects on the State Highway System, i.e., cities, counties, transit agencies, local and regional transportation authorities and consultants. Internal stakeholders would include all functional units who participate in the project development decision making process.

For local partners who sponsor projects on the State Highway system, elements of the Stewardship Agreement and modified procedures will be presented through regular meetings with each of the authorities or agencies involved. On a project by project basis, the modified procedures will be presented in regular PDT meetings when the need arises. It is anticipated the local partners will welcome the modified procedures as it will facilitate early collaboration on potential design exceptions.

For internal customers that may be affected by the delegation authorities, such as Transportation Planning, Environmental Analysis, Traffic Operations, and Maintenance, an overview of the Stewardship Agreement and modified procedures will be presented in the same manner outlined above.

FHWA involvement in project delivery will not change with the delegation of responsibilities.

4. Workforce

District 4 will use project work plans to determine which project and staff are affected by the delegation authority. Anticipated projects and impacts will include collaboration with maintenance design, permits, electrical design, traffic safety, landscape architecture, storm water, hydraulics, and project management to be familiar with delegation responsibilities and modified procedures.

Design Office Chiefs currently approve the previously delegated 2013 mandatory design exceptions along with advisory design exceptions for their respective offices and permit projects. Other offices routinely involved in approving non-standard features include the Office of Advance Planning and Maintenance Engineering. These Office Chiefs will continue to approve exceptions to advisory design standards; however, all delegated 2013 design exceptions from outside offices will be submitted to the regional Design Office Chief for consideration and approval. Approval of the additional mandatory design exceptions transferred to the district with the Baseline Stewardship Agreement will be submitted for approval to the Deputy District Director, Design. District 4's Division of Design will approve all mandatory design exceptions, regardless of which functional unit is responsible for developing the project. The District Design Liaison will coordinate interoffice and interdivision design exception approvals.

The District 4 Design Coordinator in collaboration with HQ DOD Resource Center will identify specific training needs for District Division Chiefs and Office Chiefs in design and those in other divisions that execute design exception approvals, and assure such training is made available as soon as possible upon implementation of the Stewardship Agreement.

More informally, the District 4 Design Coordinator, in conjunction with the HQ DOD Resource Center, will provide hands on guidance and on-the-job training, as needed, to clarify elements of the Stewardship Agreement to staff at all levels.

Guidance for design exception approval processes will also be posted on the D4 Design website. The DDD Design in conjunction with HQ DOD will devise criteria or requirements for the involvement of HQ DOD to clarify policies, ensure training consistency on policies, and help resolve issues brought forward by District staff.

5. Detection

District 4 will modify existing written district guidance and procedural requirements for implementing the delegation responsibility, which will be published on the District 4 Design website.

As indicated previously, a District Design Liaison will be appointed to ensure the consistency and quality of design exception approvals. The District's Design Liaison and experienced functional unit staff, where appropriate, will serve as subject matter experts. The District will consult with HQ DOD Resource Center, early and often, to obtain needed expert guidance and assure statewide consistency, especially on more complex or controversial projects.

The quarterly report prepared by the D4 Design Coordinator will serve as a management tool to monitor the consistency and quality of delegated approvals. It will also provide information to indicate corrective action may be necessary and enable management to monitor improvements. Those in the district with delegated approval authority will also be responsible for monitoring quality and process requirements through informal communication with subject matter experts and HQ DOD Resource Center. Approved documents will be reviewed and audited periodically for key indicators and performance measures as indicated in Section 7, "Results," of the SQMP.

Regular meetings will be scheduled, i.e., monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly as appropriate, to review district approved and pending mandatory design exceptions. This collaboration will assure consistency and quality throughout the District as well as statewide via the HQ DOD Project Delivery Coordinator. Participants will include District Division Chiefs, the HQ DOD Project Delivery Coordinator, the District Design Liaison and the D4 Design Coordinator.

The HQ DOD Office of Performance Management will also conduct periodic reviews, measure compliance with the SQMP and assess performance measures.

6. Issue Resolution

A risk management trigger will be established and processes developed to elevate issues when necessary during SQMP implementation. Documentation will be included to formally acknowledge the involvement of appropriate stakeholders in the resolution of issues. Systematic and recurring conflicts will be identified and elevated in a timely manner to the HQ DOD Resource Center and/or Office of Performance Management. Lessons learned will be identified in the quarterly report as part of a collaborative continuous improvement effort with HQ DOD and other stakeholders.

Initially, if a conflict is not resolved within two weeks, the Design Senior will elevate the issue to the Office Chief for resolution. If the conflict remains unresolved, the Office Chief will elevate the issue to the Design Division Chief for resolution. For complex or controversial issues, District Division Chiefs will consult with subject matter experts, the HQ DOD Resource Center and, when appropriate and not later than two weeks, elevate the issue to the DDD Design. The DDD Design will consult with HQ DOD Chief for input and resolution as necessary. For large complex and controversial projects, the DDD Design will consult with the District Director/ Chief Deputy for timely final resolution.

7. Results

HQ DOD will develop Results criteria at a future date, and will collaborate with all district and regions establishing performance indicators. The District's proposed Results criteria, as outlined in this Stewardship Quality Management Plan, are appropriate metrics in the interim.

The primary tool the District will utilize to measure and evaluate performance will be the previously identified quarterly report prepared by the D4 Design Coordinator. The following key indicators, to be included in the quarterly report, will be monitored to assess trends and facilitate continuous improvement:

- Number of delegated mandatory approvals granted
- Number of mandatory design exceptions approved after PR approval
- Cycle time from submittal of Fact Sheet to approval of design exceptions
- Completion of training - % of target staff trained
- Number of conflicts referred to the Issue Resolution process per quarter
- Number of overlooked design exceptions identified during construction

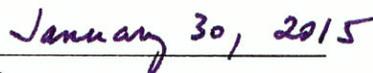
In addition to the above District evaluation of performance, the HQ DOD Office of Performance Management will conduct periodic process reviews, measure compliance with the District's SQMP, and evaluate the District's performance relative to performance measures.

Informally, the District will seek feedback from the HQ DOD Project Delivery Coordinator on the District's performance relative to expected norms statewide.

Recommend for Approval:



Helena (Lenka) Culik-Caro, District 4
Deputy District Director of Design



Date

Baseline Stewardship Agreement Delegation Authority to the Districts						District 4 Delegated Approval Authority
Highway Design Manual (HDM)						D4 Stewardship Quality Management Plan (SQMP)
HDM Chapter/Topic	Description	Conventional Highway	Expressway	Freeway	Interstate Freeway	Approval Authority (1)
Advisory Design Standards	Advisory standards use the word "should" and are indicated by Underlining	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Office Chief
2013 Delegated Mandatory Design Standards	Authority to approve deviations from Mandatory Standards delegated to the District Director as indicated by Note (2) in Table 82.1A of the HDM	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Office Chief, Design
All Mandatory Design Standards (Except for Chapter 600 and 2013 Delegated Standards)	Mandatory standards use the word "shall" and are printed in Boldface	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
Design Information Bulletins(DIB), Design Memorandum and Executive Orders						
DIB 77	Interchange Spacing	N/A	Yes	N	N	Deputy District Director, Design
DIB 79	2R Project certification Design guidance and Standards for Roadway Rehabilitation Projects and Certain Other Projects	Yes	Yes	N	N	Deputy District Director, Design
DIB 82	Pedestrian Accessibility Guidelines for Highway Projects and ADA	Yes	Yes	Yes (2)	Yes (2)	Deputy District Director, Design
DIB 83	Caltrans Supplement to FHWA Culvert Repair Practices Manual	Yes	Yes	N	N	Deputy District Director, Design
Project Development Procedures Manual (PDPM)						
PDPM 9	Modifications to existing access points or new access points to the Interstate System – Review & Approval required.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 9-Article 7	Maintenance and traffic signal projects that introduce or perpetuate nonstandard conditions - Exceptions to Design Standards	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design or Office Chief, Design
PDPM Chpt. 15, Section 2 HDM 82.2 (1)	Contract Design Changes (CCOs) - Exceptions to Design Standards.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design or Office Chief, Design
PDPM 17	Existing Utility Longitudinal Encroachments - Exceptions may be granted, but must be approved.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 17	Utility Encroachments on Toll Bridges – All installations must have approval.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 17	Reclaimed Water Systems & Encroachments - All installations must have approval	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 23	Denominations as Controlled Access Highway – Execution authority and exception to policy	N/A	Yes	Yes (3)	Yes (3)	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 23	Reopen Route Studies – requires written approval.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design

Note (1) - All Mandatory Design Standards must be within the Design Deputy District Director's chain of command

(2) - Part of the delegation implementation plan for ADA standards

(3) - Errata change dated July 3, 2015

HDM Chapter/Topic	Description	Conventional Highway	Expressway	Freeway	Interstate Freeway	Approval Authority (1)
Project Development Procedures Manual (PDPM)						
PDPM 24, 2	Conformance to Adopted Route - All deviations from the adopted route must be approved.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 24, 2	Route adoption maps – Approval authority and exceptions to policy	Yes	Yes	Yes (3)	Yes (3)	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 2, 24	Freeway Agreements and CAH – Execution authority.	N/A	Yes	Yes (3)	Yes (3)	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 24	"Project" or "Performance" Agreement – draft document requires review and approval.	Yes	Yes	No	No	Deputy District Director, Design
PDPM 29	Highway planting policy – Exceptions require approvals.	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A
PDPM 29	Separate landscape & roadway contract requirement – Exceptions to policy must be approved.	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A
PDPM 29	Landscape Funding - Exceptions to policy must be approved.	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A
PDPM 29	Plant establishment periods - Exceptions to policy must be approved.	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A
PDPM 29	Landscape Maintenance Costs - Exceptions to this policy must be approved	N/A	N/A	No	No	N/A

Note (1) - All Mandatory Design Standards must be within the Design Deputy District Director's chain of command
 (2) - Part of the delegation implementation plan for ADA standards
 (3) - Errata change dated July 3, 2015

Introduction

The purpose of the Design Stewardship Agreement¹ is to provide a contractual document which transfers the decision making authority from Caltrans Headquarters Division of Design (HQ DOD) to individual districts and defines how the district and HQ DOD will operate together with Stewardship delegation.

As related to the Design Stewardship Agreement the HQ DOD has defined stewardship as follows:

Design Stewardship is about the co-management, co-administration, and co-responsibility of the design standards, policies and procedures the department uses to manage the state transportation system. Stewardship consists of a delegation of responsibilities and a mutual accountability of assuring that those responsibilities are executed. Stewardship is a joint responsibility for the development and implementation of the state transportation system. Delegation of responsibilities and mutual accountability are defined as follows:

The **delegation of authority** means the transfer of approval authority from HQ DOD to the district for specific project level decisions as defined in this agreement.

HQ DOD will retain some project level decisions and all program level corporate activities related to delivering the state transportation program, such as leadership, technology deployment, technical assistance, training, problem solving, performance management and process improvement.

Mutual accountability refers to accountability shared by both parties and is managed by the performance measurement, risk management, technical consultation, dispute resolution, and the sharing of best practices between HQ DOD and districts.

Stewardship, as outlined in this document, is exercised through program management and project level activities.

The baseline Design Stewardship Agreement, as well as the Negotiated Design Stewardship Agreement Delegations of Authority, delegates only HQ DOD approvals but does not include approvals needed from other department divisions. The delegations presented in this document are consistent with but do not affect the delegations between FHWA and Caltrans.

¹ This document is known as the Design Delegation Agreement.

Design Stewardship Agreement Plan Overview

The Design Stewardship Agreement plan is based on the following criteria:

- A uniform baseline approval authority for all districts
- The allowance for additional approval authorities to individual districts when warranted and mutually agreed upon
- A consistent format for stewardship and performance measurement
- Clarity approval authority responsibility

The Design Stewardship Agreement is intended to be periodically amended and updated as the needs and goals of each individual district change over time.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities with regards to the Design Stewardship Agreement pertain to HQ DOD, except where otherwise noted. The Project Delivery Coordinators and other HQ DOD managers will continue to provide approvals for non-delegated authorities as needed. The three main bodies to implement the Design Stewardship Agreement are the individual Districts, the Resource Center (see Figure 1), and the Office of Performance Management.

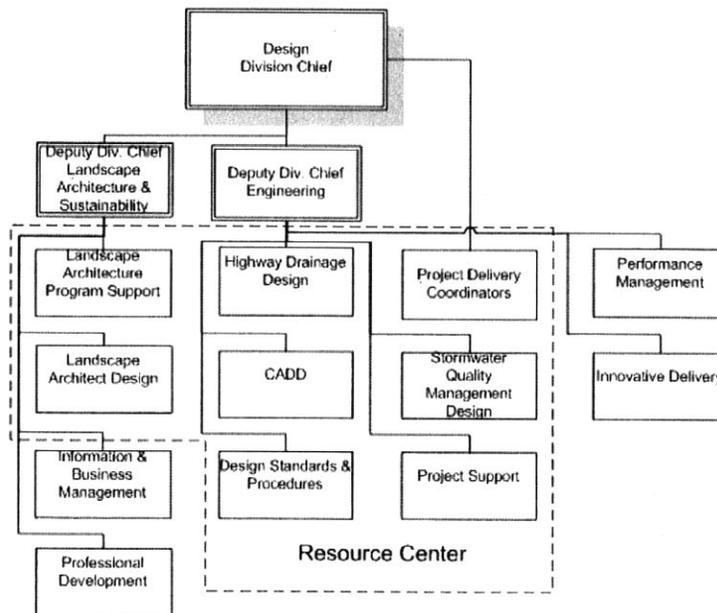


Figure 1 HQ DOD Organization Chart

Districts

Each district is expected to accept the baseline Design Stewardship Agreement Delegation Authority as presented below and will have the option to negotiate an increased level of authority beyond the baseline, reflecting their district needs. Each district will also be expected to provide an organizational structure to implement a Stewardship Quality Management Plan (SQMP) as part of the Design Stewardship Agreement. This SQMP will outline and define how the district will ensure adherence to the Design Stewardship Agreement.

Delegation of the Authorities through this Design Stewardship Agreement will transfer to the District Director. These delegations affect civil engineer works and are therefore subject to the Business and Professional code as defined in sections 6730-6731.1. If a District Director is not a registered Professional Engineer, further delegation is required in writing to the District/Regional manager responsible for the Design function. These delegations may further be delegated in writing within the design function, but not below the Supervising Transportation Engineer Level.

As noted before, the individual districts will have the opportunity to periodically amend the Design Stewardship Agreement, including the negotiated level of delegated authorities and the SQMP as needed in the future.

HQ DOD Resource Center

The HQ DOD Resource Center is a term applied to the expertise provided by the Project Delivery Coordinators, and subject matter experts in the HQ DOD offices. These individuals will provide guidance and support for the districts with regard to delegated authorities of the Design Stewardship Agreement when called upon. It should be noted that the HQ DOD Resource Center will provide subject matter expertise on topics such as geometrics, ADA standards, utility encroachments, encroachments, route matters, CADD/GIS, hydraulics, stormwater, roadside management, and landscape design, among others. The Resource Center may call upon and coordinate other functional areas outside of the HQ DOD to assist in providing input and guidance.

The HQ DOD Resource Center will develop strategies, tools and events that will share knowledge and foster the statewide consistent application of design standards and policies.

Office of Performance Management

The Office of Performance Management (OPM) will act to ensure that the individual Design Stewardship Agreements for each district are implemented. The OPM will conduct periodic reviews, measures compliance with each district SQMP, and specific performance measures. The OPM acts as the custodian of the Design Stewardship Agreements and will coordinate future modifications of the agreements and/or SQMPs. These reviews will serve to identify areas of improvement or best practices of either HQ DOD or districts. The OPM will coordinate with the Project Development Coordinators to help facilitate change to the Stewardship Agreement.

Joint Roles and Responsibilities

It will be the joint role and responsibility of the above entities to abide by the agreed upon delegated authorities and SQMPs. It is the joint responsibility of the districts and Project Delivery Coordinators to determine any necessary further definition of delegated authorities not covered by the initial Design Stewardship Agreement and to document the decisions made (e.g. this would apply to projects with scopes that cross multiple facility types). There is an expectation that joint roles and responsibilities are determined by consensus; however when disagreements cannot be resolved, the dispute resolution process as prescribed in the Project Development Procedures Manual Chapter 21 will be followed.

Baseline Design Stewardship Agreement Delegation of Authority

With reference to Appendix A, the baseline Design Stewardship Agreement applies to all HQ DOD approvals on conventional highways and expressways for all districts. In addition, the following approval authorities apply to freeways and will be delegated to the districts:

- Approval of Freeway Agreements, Controlled Access Highway Agreements, and Route Adoption maps.
- Encroachments due to recycled water systems
- Denomination of freeway declaration for facilities operating as conventional highways and expressways or unconstructed routes
- Approval of exception to accessibility design standards for all highway types that is conventional, expressway, and freeway.²
- Previously district delegated mandatory design exception approval authorities as shown in the Highway Design Manual (HDM) will remain unchanged (enacted in 2013).

The following approval authorities are excluded from the baseline Design Stewardship Agreement and retained by the HQ DOD:

- Project of Statewide Interest (POSI) – criteria to be developed by HQ DOD
- High-low underground utility risk policy approvals
- Longitudinal utility encroachments on freeways or expressways
- Non-utility encroachments
- Safety Roadside Rest Areas Master Plan
- Non-Standard Special Provision (NSSP) approvals within HQ DOD.

Negotiated Design Stewardship Agreement Delegations of Authority

Each District has the ability to request additional delegation authorities beyond the baseline Design Stewardship Agreement outlined above. Additional Authorities as Negotiated by Districts may include, but are not limited to:

- All design approvals on freeways
- Longitudinal utility encroachments
- Hi-low underground utility risk policy approvals
- 2R Project Certification concurrence for freeway projects.

Conditions will be included in an appropriate SQMP which demonstrates a proven ability to responsibly manage the requested additional delegations.

² This sentence is different from the implementation plan to clarify the span of delegation for ADA standards.