

Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

May 20, 2005

Meeting Minutes

Wilsonville Public Library
Wilsonville, Oregon

Members Present: Joel McCarroll, Vice-Chair, ODOT Region 4; Charles Radosta, ITE/Kittelton & Associates; Cindy Schmitt, Marion County; Randy Wooley, City of Beaverton; Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Joseph Marek, Clackamas County; Alan Hageman, OSP; Ed Fischer, Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer

Members Absent: Eric Niemeyer, Chair, Jackson County; Robin Lewis, City of Bend;

Others Present: Doug Bish, Paul Davis, Jan Gipson, Massoud Saberian, Greg Stellmach, ODOT Traffic Engineering & Operations Section; Richard Wood, ODOT Region 1 Traffic Operations; Stephen Wilson, ODOT Region 2 Traffic Operations; Dan MacDonald, ODOT Rail Section; Rick Braden, Oregon State Parks; Bill Kloos, Roger Geller, City of Portland; Orville Gaylor, retired ODOT; Marc Butorac, Kittelson & Associates; Andra Henriques, CH2M Hill; Christina Choi;

Introduction

Vice Chair Chairperson Joel McCarroll called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. All present members and guests introduced themselves. Joe Marek moved, Cindy Schmitt seconded, and the committee approved the meeting minutes for March 18th with a correction on a name spelling. Cindy Schmitt moved, Alan Hageman seconded, and the committee approved the March 25th minutes. Massoud Saberian invited attendees to view a flyer handout on flashing yellow left-turn arrow signals and send him any comments. Joe Marek and Cindy Schmitt said they had additional agenda items if time allowed.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on MUTCD Adoption

Doug Bish said that in response to comments from FHWA, ODOT had drafted some proposed changes to the Oregon Supplements and wanted to get OTCDC buy-in on the changes.

State Sign Engineer Greg Stellmach determined that the supplement for Section 2D.06 could be dropped because most lettering on Historical Trail and Recreational Symbol signs are not part of the principal legend and therefore not subject to the minimum 6" letter height. Upon further review, the supplement isn't needed.

Decision: Ed Fischer moved, Rob Burchfield seconded, and the committee voted in favor of dropping this supplement under Section 2D.06.

The supplement to Standard "B" for Section 2D.30 in which we replaced the Standard for route signing at the beginning of routes and route changes with "Should" language, is proposed to be dropped at the request of FHWA. The Standard for "C" would continue to be replaced with the option, "May" for the end of the route. There would be additional guidance established that it was desirable to sign end of routes where that would be helpful to travelers unfamiliar with the area.

Decision: Ed Fischer moved approval to delete the guidance to Standard "B" for Section 2D.30 and accept what's in the MUTCD. Rob Burchfield seconded and all voted in favor.

In Section 4K.03 dealing with signs mounted more than 19 feet above the pavement, FHWA was concerned with overhead signs mounted outside the limits of a driver's forward viewing angle. They recommended supplemental ground-mounted signs where applicable.

Decision: Rob Burchfield moved, Randy Wooley seconded, and the committee voted in favor of the supplemental language in Section 4K.03. stating that when the height of the bottom of an overhead sign is higher than 19 feet, supplemental ground-mounted signing should be considered.

Approve Short Term Traffic Control Handbook For Operations of 3 Days or Less

Cindy Schmitt, after providing handouts, reviewed the participants and process in the effort towards drafting the new Handbook. There is still some editing to do, but the draft has been reviewed by the Attorney General. No new content or substantial change in current content is anticipated. Cindy said the Handbook is ready for OTCDC approval and a recommendation to the OTC to approve it in their June or July meeting. The committee was also asked to allow the latitude for the subcommittee to edit for typos, grammar, punctuation, to make any OTCDC-recommended changes, and to adapt the document to the final print format. Any substantive changes would be brought back to the committee for approval. The intent is to revise and republish every two years, make interim updates available on ODOT's website and convene the subcommittee periodically to address any problems or new situations as needed. The subcommittee also wants the new handbook distributed more broadly than previous versions.

Cindy discussed some significant committee decisions. These included using the MUTCD wording for worker/flagger attire, cone spacing requirements, balancing the focus on motorist safety vs. worker safety, flagging vs. spotting with new spotter guidelines, and MUTCD vs. OR-OSHA as authority. The fact that Oregon OSHA is not at all up to date with the current MUTCD version was discussed. OROSHA has just adopted the 2000 MUTCD and has no plans to catch up in the foreseeable future. Even the national OSHA hasn't caught up. The Handbook makes clear that both must be followed. Permit work vs. contract work vs. maintenance work vs. utility work was an issue because requirements under each can vary significantly. The handbook clarifies that permission to work in the right of way is required and can be conditional. OROSHA would cite under whichever version of the MUTCD the work permit is tied to.

Jan said the new handbook isn't taking any exceptions to the 2003 MUTCD. There are three issues where the handbook will be more restrictive than the MUTCD: cone spacing; required TC elements for freeway mobile work zones; and setting a maximum for sign spacing.

The MUTCD is expanded by addition of the spotter guidelines, work in 3 to 5 lane two-way roads with added passing lane or continuous two-way left turn lanes, and brief situations such as checking a manhole.

Two packets of drawings were distributed to the committee that will be folded into the draft handbook.

New to the handbook is intermediate term application. The 2003 MUTCD does not consider night work as short term unless it's less than an hour. That meant the old Short Term handbook didn't cover it any more. The new handbook will now cover intermediate work of three days or less or night work of over an hour's duration (up to three days).

Also new are incident and event traffic controls in Section 6I, which was worked out with the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police and representatives from emergency and fire response. The general principles section has quite a bit new in it and allows for training everyone on the same basis. It includes night work considerations, discussions of road authorities and traffic control, worker safety apparel, roundabouts and pavement markings. A field checklist for setting up a worksite will be on the back cover. What to consider when leaving a worksite in place, 2003 MUTCD guidance and standards on air panels, portable variable message signs, etc. are also included.

Regarding pavement marking, the subcommittee agreed that for longitudinal skip lines, if two were eliminated, they needed to be replaced immediately. The committee agreed in principle but also felt that no-pass zones needed to be included so that they remained clearly as no-pass zones and the wording should be modified to be sure it includes pavement legends and significant portions of crosswalks.

For unattended worksites, the handbook clarifies that if you make a mess, you must leave it in drivable condition, and leave all your work signs and channelization devices in place. All unattended worksites with traffic control devices must be routinely inspected by a knowledgeable person for adequate compliance, visibility and condition of the traffic control devices. Traffic control devices must be adequate for all expected or anticipated conditions such as daylight, night, twilight, and wet or dry pavement.

Cone spacing – ODOT Safety brought this to the table. They want short term work zones to look as close to construction zones as possible in terms of traffic control. Construction specs have cone spacing for tapers of 20 feet for 40 mph or less or 40 feet for speeds of 45 MPH or above in the taper. They are carried at the same spacing for the longitudinal which is a lot. The subcommittee felt that was excessive, so they went to 2X the taper spacing for longitudinal. The ODOT crews, especially rural, felt this was overkill, both because of the number of people they'd need to comply and the extra vehicle needed to carry that many cones. The consensus was to accept the spacing as provided by the subcommittee for tapers and longitudinal cones but to come up with a more lenient standard for rural freeways and expressways on the tapers equal to 2X the speed limit.

Decision: Ed Fischer moved to accept the draft Oregon Temporary Traffic Control Handbook for operations of 3 Days or Less as presented by the subcommittee and as will be edited in accordance with committee discussion. Charles Radosta seconded and the committee approved.

Warrants for Shared Lane Symbols (Bicycle & Automobiles)

Rob Burchfield introduced Roger Geller to return to the topic from the March 18th meeting. The city has been working on proposed warrants or guidelines for the use of these symbols which he calls 'sharrows'. Robert said that the city doesn't want to go through FHWA's experimental process because the bar is too high for them to want to do that and FHWA's requirement to remove the symbols at the end of a study period. It's been demonstrated in non-FHWA-sanctioned experiments. Robert said California is moving ahead with it as policy at the state level and he hopes that Oregon might do the same. Roger discussed the handouts he passed out. He said there are two conflicting elements to using 'sharrows'. One of them is the desire to provide a better riding environment on roadways where they should have bike lanes but they can't be fit in. The other is to not have 'sharrow' lanes seen as a substitute for bike lanes that would otherwise fit on the roadway. One of the handouts is a proposal for evaluation criteria for assessing use of shared lane pavement markings. This document is not scored or ranked. If all the criteria can't be answered "Yes", then a roadway shouldn't be further considered. The roadway must be a classified city bikeway, the decision to not stripe bicycle lanes on the segment must have resulted from a public process, a parking demand study needs to have been conducted, a traffic study needs to have been conducted,



and then there can be consideration of roadway characteristics and operating conditions to determine if the road segments have non-supporting characteristics or supporting characteristics. Portland is interested in what support the committee could provide for the proposal. Randy said there could also be uses for the symbol in Beaverton if it's approved.

Ed said he would not want to see the 'sharrows' used on facilities with any combination of more than 30 MPH speed, high volumes and solid centerline. The city was hoping to be a little more flexible than that, using engineering judgment. The Attorney General says a slow-moving vehicle or bicycle doesn't constitute an obstruction that can be passed by crossing a solid centerline, which argues against using them on one-lane in direction of travel roads. He is concerned whether the committee has the authority to endorse the proposal.

Rob said that he didn't think the FHWA process is really an option for cities. He suggested the symbols are not prohibited by the MUTCD, and the state could sanction use in the Oregon Supplements. He would have a tough time otherwise going forward with using the symbols without the committee blessing since they are not officially and specifically approved through the Board.

The committee agreed in general that the symbol is acceptable and that the criteria was generally okay except that facilities over 30 MPH, with high volumes and solid centerline should not be considered. Something like the 'sharrow' may turn out to be a national standard in the long run. Michael Ronkin was suggested as a possible ODOT contact to help explore FHWA and NCUTCD contacts. Kevin Haas was also mentioned.

The committee agreed that Rob and Roger pursue further information on whether FHWA might have any leniency or alternative experimental options, what other options for experimentation might be available, and bring back proposals on some statement of support the committee or ODOT could consider providing to facilitate Portland's proposal at the next meeting.

⇒ Action Item – Paul will follow-up to be sure Rob is on the July committee agenda with his follow-up proposals.

High Intensity Activated Crosswalk Signals (HAWK)

Bill Kloos introduced this method of allowing cyclists and pedestrians to cross major streets at reasonable intervals. Half signals are where there are main street signals and side street STOP signs and the side streets have ped heads and push buttons. In Portland there are 48 such installations. Some of the concerns are that side street motorists are confused when the arterial traffic stops while main street motorists are consternated when the side street traffic pulls out in front of them when the main street signal is green. Some of these locations have infrequent ped calls and the main street motorist is used to seeing the "rest" and green signal constantly and sometimes just blow through the pedestrian signal when it does activate. Also, side street motorists just go through the crosswalk into the intersection when they see the main street vehicles stopped. The HAWK, a hybrid beacon-signal developed in Tucson, is a possible solution to this issue. With two red balls over an amber ball, it can be visualized as a "Mickey Mouse" configuration. The signal rests in the "dark" or "off" condition. Upon a pedestrian call, the main street head starts flashing a yellow ball, for the typical length of what a side street yellow phase would be. Then the solid yellow comes on for the typical main street yellow time that would be used. Then it turns to a solid red for vehicles and a "WALK" for peds. At the end of the "WALK" interval and the beginning of the flashing "DON'T WALK", there is a "wig-wag" flashing operation of the red lights. At the completion of the flashing "DON'T WALK" interval, it goes back to a "dark" resting position. Concerns have been expressed that the "wig-wag" was confusing, and perhaps a simultaneous flashing of the two red balls might be better. Having the signal view blocked by another vehicle is a concern in multiple lane approaches. However, people in studies do seem to be

complying with the signal. Portland is looking at also allowing bicyclists to have crossing access with a push button at the curb and a bike signal head. They still need to finalize this experiment. Funding will become available July 1. Concern that the signal might be seen as broken in the "dark" phase is why they used the "Mickey Mouse" configuration, rather than a three-section vertical signal. The City of Tucson has produced a video of the signal operation which can be seen at <http://dot.tucsonaz.gov/traffic3/HAWK.wmv>.

In-Street Crosswalk Pedestrian YIELD Signs

Ed Fischer said he doesn't believe that the Supplement, which prohibits the use of in-street pedestrian YIELD signs, is necessary. He thinks they are a better approach than using STOP signs for the same situation. The second concern is whether we start policing their use by organizations like the Wilsonville Public library. Ed didn't ask for action on the supplement or enforcement issue at this point.



School Zone Legislation Update

Randy said the House approved (by 59-1) a bill saying there will still be a difference between adjacent and non-adjacent zones. In adjacent (to school grounds), you can use flashing yellow beacons. If you don't it will be 20 MPH from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the non-adjacent school zones, flashing yellow beacons can be used but if you don't it's just "when children are present" and there's no changes to that definition. The speed limit of the street the school zone is in is no longer an issue. It will take effect July 1st, 2006. The Senate Transportation Committee is no longer meeting so it was passed to the Rules Committee, which has yet to meet on it.

Sign Policy & Guidelines Update

Greg Stellmach introduced a Sign Policy & Guidelines update for scenic bike route signs. It was approved in concept in January for scenic bike routes and needs final approval.

Decision: Ed Fischer moved, Randy Wooley seconded, and all voted to approve the new sign.

Greg also asked members to be looking at some other handouts and send him any comments on a proposed roll-up sign before the next meeting.

Non-Agenda Items

Cindy announced she has a re-worked definition of "When Children are Present", which she is looking for opportunities to place in front of legislators.

Joe Marek would like to have his non-agenda item regarding parking prohibited pavement markings on the next meeting agenda.

⇒ Action Item – Paul will follow-up to be sure Joe is on the July committee agenda with his pavement marking of prohibited parking areas.

Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:55 a.m.

Next Meeting Date

The OTCDC meets next on July 15, 2005 at Marion County Public Works.