

# Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

November 16, 2007

## Meeting Minutes

Marion County Public Works  
Salem, Oregon

Members Present: [Alan Hageman](#), Chair, OSP; [Cynthia Schmitt](#), Vice-Chair, Marion County; [Brian Barnett](#), City of Springfield; [Ed Chastain](#), Lane County; [Mike Coleman](#), City of Portland; [Ed Fischer](#), Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; [Robin Lewis](#), City of Bend; [Joel McCarroll](#), ODOT Region 4; [Joseph Marek](#), Clackamas County; [Charles Radosta](#), ITE, Kittelson and Associates

Others Present: Doug Bish, Debby Corey, Kevin Haas, Katie Johnson, Chris Rowland, Greg Stellmach, ODOT Traffic-Roadway Section; Angela Kargel, ODOT Region 2 Tech Center; Tamera Abbott, Oregon State Parks; Jim Renner, Oregon Travel Info Council; Nick Fortey, FHWA; Terry Hockett, Kevin Hottmann, City of Salem; Tom Larsen, City of Eugene; Miguel Guzman, Washington County

### Introduction – Approval of Minutes – Additional Agenda Items

Chairperson Alan Hageman, called the meeting to order. Ed Fischer then introduced new (returning) member, Ed Chastain from Lane County. Members and other attendees introduced themselves. Cindy Schmitt then moved to accept the September 28, 2007 meeting, with one minor change. Charles Radosta seconded and the committee voted unanimously in favor.





### OLD BUSINESS

#### [Sign Policy & Guidelines Update](#)

Greg Stellmach presented a handout of [proposed changes](#) with [supplemental information](#) to the committee and reviewed the proposed changes. The committee acted as follows:

- Approved the WHEELCHAIR USER ONLY plaque consisting of a Blue, retro-reflective background and white, retro-reflective legend. This was a [change](#) from the original white with black design. These colors match the Disabled Person Parking Sign (OR20-6B), which the plaque should only be used with in order to have the ORS and the fines listed to help enforcement and serve as a deterrent to offenders. Less changes to the current sign design should make it easier to implement. The new signing implements Oregon law in Senate Bill [716](#).



- Approved the deletion of Sign No. CW 21-13 NO CENTER STRIPE. The sign is already in the Section 6F.44 of the MUTCD and it can be covered in ODOT's project specifications. Local jurisdictions are able to utilize/interpret the MUTCD requirements for this sign on their projects. 
- Approved a change to the usage information for Sign No. OW 15-6 CONGESTION to clarify that it shall not be used on the interstate highway system.
- Approved deletion of Sign No. OW 15-10 WRECK AHEAD Black on Orange and moving it to the temporary traffic control section under Sign No. CW 15-10 with Black on Fluorescent Pink. The committee also approved changing wording to state that this sign is intended for temporary use by road authorities, emergency vehicle and certified tow vehicle operators to meet the requirements of ORS 822.220. The "should" wording was also changed to "shall" to be clear that the signs shall be removed when the hazard no longer exists. Existing Black on Orange signs may still be used.
- Approved changes to the instructions for Sign No. OW 15-14 PREPARE TO STOP WHEN LIGHTS FLASH to clarify that it "may" be used and that the need for the sign shall be documented by an engineering study that addresses the second standard, paragraph E, Section 4D.15 of the MUTCD and that Dilemma Zone protection must be considered in the design.
- Tabled a proposal to change the instructions for Sign No. OW 20-1 STOPPED VEHICLES AHEAD specifying that it should not be used on mainline sections of the interstate highway system due to legend size being too small. Questions about the color and thickness of the sign legend, as well as whether it should be limited to LED technology will be looked at again.
- Tabled proposed Sign No. OD 12-5 TRAVEL INFO CALL 511 due to issues about the non-standard size of the sign blank and the phone/cord symbol surrounding the "511". Clarification of sign location determination authority (Region Traffic Manager?) will also be addressed. 
- Approved change to Sign No. OD-411A ENTERING (CITY NAME) to display the size of a two-line sign, and clarified use/size on freeways/expressways.
- Approved change to Sign No. OD-412 ENTERING (COUNTY NAME) to clarify maximum of two additional approved statewide or national program logo riders beneath the sign and to not include population. The additional logo riders will not be installed on the interstate highway system.
- Tabled further discussion of changes to Sign No. OD-413 WELCOME TO (CITY NAME) with city logo that includes a two-line option. Further discussion of where the sign should not be placed and other considerations will be reviewed and discussed at a future meeting.

Due to time constraints, review of other proposed changes were put off until the January meeting.

### **Legislative Concept Ideas (for 2009 Legislature)**

Ed Fischer stated as a preface to this discussion that any proposed legislation forwarded to ODOT's Director should have the full support of the committee. Anything that carries much controversy amongst committee members is going to have difficulties getting through the Legislature. Kevin Haas introduced a handout outlining 6 [legislative concepts](#) which included the applicable statute, the suggested change(s) and similar statutes in other neighboring states (where available). He also described a companion handout gives the text from the applicable [Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules](#) (ORS's & OAR's).

U-turns at signalized intersections – The suggested change would reverse Oregon law and allow U-turns at signalized intersections where they can be made safely and without interfering with other traffic unless posted otherwise. This would bring Oregon law into closer conformance with other states. It would also rescind OAR 734-020-0025 which provides criteria for U-turn designation at signalized intersections. Members had previously been provided a copy of a [U-turn study](#) ODOT did for the Legislature in 2005. If enacted, the proposed change should eliminate some confusion for drivers while still putting the responsibility on drivers to decide if they can safely make the maneuver without interfering with the traffic flow. Most members were decidedly in favor, feeling that divided medians in particular make it desirable for this method of vehicle access to the other side of the road. They believe many won't even notice a change. They see it as a positive to be more like most other states and expect drivers and businesses frustrated by median dividers to heartily approve of a change. The City of Portland, which doesn't use median dividers so extensively, is less enthusiastic. Mike Coleman asked to what extent the current law is a problem. He expressed concern that the city will have to endure the expense of installing a considerable number of "No U-Turn" symbol signs. He said the urban Portland environment has conditions such as driveways within 50 feet of an intersection and bus stops that a driver may not realize make a U-turn unsafe. He also foresees more people making the maneuver and having a negative effect on traffic flow. Marion County has some concern that folks will take a switch in Oregon's law to imply that a U-turn can be made safely unless specifically prohibited and has seen no statistics on what effect the movement has on road capacity. If people don't have the ability to make the turn without making it a two point maneuver, it could be an issue. However, depending on the language of a change in law, Cindy Schmitt is mildly supportive. Joe Marek said that there is an issue of enforcement under current law with people new to Oregon not expecting tickets when they make the turns. Judges can be reluctant to uphold tickets without a sign specifically prohibiting U-turns. Brian Barnett agreed, saying judges in his area want to feel like drivers leave court feeling they got a "fair shake".



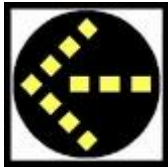
Cindy said that she thought that if this law is addressed at all, the possible revision should be more thorough including paragraphs (b) and (c). The committee agreed to work further on this with ongoing communications via email, etc. Then it is expected to be forwarded to the ODOT Director.

### Driver response to inoperable signals

Kevin said that the idea is to bring Oregon law into compliance with common media advice and the Oregon Drivers Manual to treat these signals as an all-way stop except at railroad grade crossings or traffic control beacons for pedestrians (hawk signals). Cindy said that in previous years a subcommittee had preferred the approach Washington State takes but that is not included in the handouts. There is concern that some drivers follow media advice and the drivers manual, while in other cases at high speed intersections, the drivers on the main road treat it as though they have the right of way. There was not a consensus to change Oregon law on this but members will be provided with a copy of Washington's [law](#) to see if there's enough interest in proposing a change in the law.

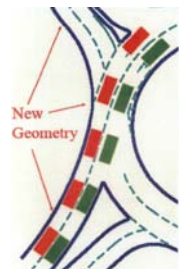
### Flashing yellow arrows

This proposal would add language advising drivers that the flashing yellow arrow allows them to cautiously enter the intersection to make the turn indicated by the arrow while yielding the right of way to other vehicles. Other states do not have such language. It's possible that Ray Pusey (Delaware), a member of the Signals Technal Committee of the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, may be able to advise what they are doing at that level for the Uniform Vehicle Code. The committee consensus was the proposed legislation is a good solution but not enough of an issue to push forward.



### Roundabouts (Failure to Yield)

Brian Barnett spoke for a proposal to repeal ORS 811.292 which requires vehicles in multilane roundabouts to yield to a second vehicle lawfully exiting the roundabout from a position ahead and to the left of the person's vehicle. His premise is that the law is not necessary if roundabouts are engineered with the right geometry and provided several [illustrations](#) to his point. Properly engineered, entering vehicles will yield to all vehicles within the roundabout intersection prior to entering and either exiting at the next exit or going on further through the roundabout. He is further concerned that retaining the law will permit less appropriate geometry in future roundabouts. Others weren't so certain that the geometry would always prevent the conflict. Some felt current law doesn't encourage bad behavior and that the law may still be useful for some situations. The consensus was therefore not to bring this to the Legislature and have to explain the issues and proposed solution to them at this time.



### Enforceability of regulatory messages on Variable Message Signs (VMS)

Some people had thought we might need a change in law in order to use this sign technology in place of standard regulatory signing. Kevin Haas said his research indicated this is not true. Since the adoption of the MUTCD by the Transportation Commission, [Section 2A.07](#) allows VMS to be used for regulatory, among other uses. Even if VMS were to be used for variable speed limits, Kevin believes that would be covered under ORS 810.180, subsections 8 (temporary speeds) and 9 (emergency speeds). The committee decided it would be good to get an opinion confirming this from the Attorney General and not consider any legislation at this time.

✓ **Action Item** – ODOT will look into getting Attorney General opinion on enforceability of regulatory VMS signing.

### Vehicles turning across bike lanes

There is no suggestion on the table but in view of recent accidents in Portland between trucks and bicycles, the committee discussed the possibility of changing Oregon law in line with California law which requires drivers to position the motor vehicle in the bicycle lane prior to making right turns. There was no enthusiasm for getting involved in this issue. Local jurisdictions may get involved in the issue and are welcome to do so.

## **NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

### **New Officers**

Ed Fischer nominated Cindy Schmitt as OTCDC Chairperson for next year. Charles Radosta seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Cindy Schmitt nominated Ed Chastain to serve as Vice Chairperson for the next year. Ed Fischer seconded and the committee voted unanimously in favor.

### **Subdivision Kiosks in Right-of-Way**

Joe Marek brought this up for Miguel Guzman, from Washington County. The county has had a request for permission to place kiosks in the right of way. They are plastic structures with a roof and signs pointing to different subdivisions. Joe said it was best described as a stack of street name signs but with subdivision names that direct people looking for real estate. Miguel said that it was hoped that these could help prevent a proliferation of sandwich board signs. Ed suggested the issue be brought to a future meeting with pictures and further concepts to look at and consider.

### **Clackamas County Public Service Messages on Signal Cabinets**

Joe showed some [pictures](#) of decals the county is experimenting with on signal controller cabinets. He will update the committee on how they work out.



### **Future Meeting Dates**

The next meeting is scheduled January 18, 2008 at Marion County Public Works. The March 21, 2008 meeting will be in Springfield at the City Hall library meeting room, and a May 9 meeting location in the Portland area has not yet been finalized. The July 18 meeting is tentatively scheduled for Salem, but we will look into holding that meeting in Bend.

### **Meeting Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned shortly after noon.