

# Oregon Traffic Control Devices Committee

## Meeting Minutes

—Corrected—

July 20, 2001

### *Marion County Public Works, Salem, Oregon*

Members Present: Stephen Wilson, Chair, ODOT Region 4; Rob Burchfield, City of Portland; Ed Fischer, Secretary, ODOT State Traffic Engineer; Gary Judd, Deschutes County; Joseph Marek, Clackamas County; Randall Wooley, City of Beaverton; Gordon Renskers, OSP; Mike Wilson, City of Bend; Charles Radosta, ITE/Kittelsohn & Associates; Bill Brownlee for Cynthia Schmitt, Marion County

Members Absent: Cynthia Schmitt

Others Present: Orville Gaylor, Rick Wood, Doug Bish, Sam Johnston, Jan Gipson, ODOT Traffic Management Section; Craig Black, ODOT Region 2; Nick Fortey, FHWA; Bill Kloos, City of Portland, Robert Morast, Washington County; Robert Kortt, RDK Engineering; Eric Niemeyer, Jackson County

### **Introduction/Approval of April 2001 Meeting Minutes/Additional Agenda Items**

Chairperson Stephen Wilson called the meeting to order. The Committee voted approval of the May 18, 2001 meeting minutes followed by introductions.

### **Old Business**

#### **Next Step for Supplements to MUTCD Millennium Edition**

Ed Fischer discussed where FHWA is with the new publication. The errata just came out in June and consisted of grammatical/typographical material. It looks like a more substantive amendment may be out sometime late this year. The question was asked whether the committee wants to go ahead with the Oregon Supplement to the MUTCD. The consensus was to go ahead in September and hope any changes to the MUTCD are out in time to incorporate any necessary changes to the Supplement. Randall Wooley said ITE announced at a District 6 meeting that they are going ahead with their publication of the new manual. FHWA will only put out the web copy. Randall thought that ITE is proceeding and those who have ordered copies will get them within a few weeks. Regarding the expected technical corrections, Orville Gaylor said he'd heard anywhere from 400-500 changes. Jan said that she didn't expect any sweeping changes, more like clarifications of inconsistencies and insertion of things previously left out. Jan said that where ODOT wants to adopt the caution bar on the arrow boards, FHWA said it was inadvertently left out and will be replaced. This was a proposed supplement that will become moot. She said the OAR process for the supplements goes slowly enough that we should be able to make any needed changes during the process when the technical amendments to the MUTCD come out. Randall Wooley said he'd be inclined to proceed since he's found some areas of the new MUTCD that clarify the 1988 edition which has come in handy at some public meetings.

Discussion was had as to the changes in the speed law in Oregon regarding limits would need to be addressed. Jan said that was one of the items she was going to bring up. She said the rule has already been written, it would just need to be added to the proposed Supplement. Ed said the Governor is pretty much directing ODOT to develop and adopt some administrative rules which he would discuss later in the meeting. He said that he wants to see the use of the word, "Limit" on the interstates. Jan said we needed to discuss whether we even want to include that OAR at all. It was clarified that in order to use "Limit" on the interstate highways we don't need to supplement the MUTCD, but for other highways where we don't want to use it, a supplement will be needed. Jan said this was the only area where the Legislature affected what would go into the supplements. Ed suggested once the speed zone supplement is finalized the OAR process for the Oregon Supplements will be started. Further discussion was held off until the appropriate agenda item (below).

## MUTCD 2000, Proposed Oregon Supplements

Jan and Orville then went into new and revised supplement material.

2F.04 Number and Size of Logos and Signs – Orville said that historically ODOT has been requiring about two more inches room between logos than the federal manual specifies in order to have room for riders to fit directly beneath the appropriate logo. He said this supplement was to cover this practice.

Thus, the last sentence in the second standard under 2F.04 would be changed to read:

**“The vertical and horizontal spacing between logo panels should not exceed 254 mm (10 in) and 305 mm (12 in), respectively.”**

2F.09 Signs at Intersections – Like 2F.04 Orville said this supplement is intended to continue current ODOT practice of not changing logos into TODS signing at intersections where TODS and Logos may both be used. This provides continuity for the driver and preserves target value for the Logo owner. The supplement would modify the first standard to read:

**“Where both tourist-oriented information (Chapter 2G) and specific service information would be needed at the same intersection, the design of the tourist-oriented directional signs may be used, and incorporate the specific service information.”**

Decision: Ed Fischer moved, Joe Marek seconded, and the committee approved the supplements to 2F.04 and 2F.09 as amended (leaving out references to page numbers).

2C.32 NO PASSING ZONE Sign – Jan said this supplement had received further comment in that the second sentence states that no pass zones should be initiated with the DO NOT PASS sign (R4-1), whereas we don't currently use this sign very often where no pass striping is used.

**“The DO NOT PASS pennant (W-14) shall not be used in Oregon. No pass zones should be initiated with the DO NOT PASS sign (R4-1).”**

The intent of the supplement was to disallow the use of the DO NOT PASS pennant (W-14). Will Bradshaw had suggested changing the “should” to “may” language. There being no requirement for the R4-1 sign in the new MUTCD, the committee questioned the need for any language on the sign.

Decision: Ed Fischer moved, Gary Judd seconded, and the committee approved the modified supplement to 2C.32, striking the sentence requiring the R4-1 sign to initiate all no passing zones.

2C.22 & 3B.26 Speed Hump Signs & Markings Revisited – Will Bradshaw had also suggested requiring the warning sign since he felt it was more important than the pavement legend. This fueled a renewed discussion by the committee of whether signs should be required or encouraged for all or any speed humps, whether it could be either signs or pavement markings, and practical and legal considerations.

Decision: The committee came to consensus to the Supplement to 3B.26 and modify Section 2C.22 with the following supplement:

**“Speed hump signs or markings shall be placed on a public roadway speed hump to identify it's location. When several speed humps are placed in a series along a roadway between intersections, a single SPEED HUMP sign with a rider indicating the series of humps ahead may be posted for the series.”**

The committee also discussed whether a crosswalk sign could be interpreted as a valid warning of an “engineered vertical roadway deflection design” in the form of a raised or “table” crosswalk. It was pointed out

that the CROSSWALK sign is also used for non-raised crosswalks, thus confusing the issue. Ed Fischer said that if such raised crossings aren't signed/marked in accordance with the MUTCD & Oregon Supplement, the jurisdiction could find itself arguing in court why it was not.

#### 2B.11 Speed Limit sign --

Speed Limits The current OAR in the supplement says we don't use the word, "LIMIT" on speed signs. Jan said if we want to use the word "LIMIT" on the interstate, we have the option of discontinuing the current OAR, thus leaving it optional per the MUTCD, or rewriting the OAR to make it optional. The committee discussed where speeds are limits and where they are subject to the basic rule, the problem with enforcement where VBR is the charge, and how far and fast Oregon should go in adding the word, "LIMIT" to speed signs.

Randall Wooley said the ORS and the new MUTCD are ambiguous enough that we could put "LIMIT" on all signs and be consistent. Concern was expressed that allowing speed signs with and without "LIMIT" would be more confusing. Ed said he thought the greater ambiguity was in not saying "LIMIT" where the speed is a limit. He would rather start using the word if we're going in that direction now, than spend the money again replacing signs down the road. He pointed out that it would have to be phased in at any rate. Jan said her research indicated the main difference between VBR and speed limit enforcement was not where the line on enforcement is drawn, but the amount of time officers must spend in court. The committee clarified that the speed within the urban growth boundary of any incorporated city is an actual speed limit.

Decision: The committee agreed to have Jan draft revised language for committee approval allowing but not requiring the use of the word, "LIMIT" on all speed signs.

### **New Business**

#### **Flashing Yellow Protected/Permissive Left Turn Displays**

Ed Fischer, Eric Niemeyer Craig Black and Bill Kloos – briefed the committee on the ongoing NCHRP study, on alternatives to the existing PPLT signal displays of a green ball in permissive mode. They discussed three and four head alternatives to the doghouse , utilizing yellow and flashing yellow arrows, and other variations. Bill Kloos handed out examples of the alternatives under study in Portland.

Eric Niemeyer described and showed video of his work in Jackson County, including a red clear-out arrow phase of 3-5 seconds. Craig Black suggested it would be a good idea to be sure the clear-out phase also allows pedestrians to get started across the street. Eric said the three head version was effective where there wasn't sufficient vertical clearance for the four head model. He said he hadn't noted any difference in motorists response to the variation. He said the three head light was a cost effective method of converting intersections from protected only to protected-permissive configurations. One program can be written and used at each intersection. Eric said they had had press coverage of the change but did not use warning signs about the traffic control change.

Craig Black, discussing the Woodburn sites he's been working on, said that he liked the all-red clearance before the permissive light comes on both to allow the opposing traffic to get started and to allow pedestrians to get started and be visible in the crosswalk. The Woodburn site did use advance signing for the traffic control change for the northbound and southbound traffic, the only directions that would see a change. Craig expects to see less delay of traffic during non-peak hours as a result of the change in signal display.

Ed Fischer said the plan is to get additional data from national test sites this summer and present to the national signals technical committee next January. If acceptable, wording to allow the flashing arrow display in an amendment to the MUTCD will be drafted.

Ed also advised of a web site ([www.kittelson.com/pplt/status](http://www.kittelson.com/pplt/status)) where people can get a look at the NCHRP project, including working papers. (Note: More information is available by clicking on the "Home" button at the site.)

## Speed Bill Update

Ed Fischer then reported on the current status of SB502. Governor Kitzhaber is expected to sign the bill after being sure his concerns are addressed in the implementation rules (OAR). Troy Costales talked to Ed about the Governor's concerns and said he expected the Governor to want to talk to Ed on the 25<sup>th</sup> after seeing Bruce Warner on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July. Ed reported from Troy Costales' notes on what the Governor wants.

- Changing speeds on the interstates should become more of a public process. Speed increases will be decided before the Oregon Transportation Commission after speed zone investigations rather than by the State Traffic Engineer.
- SB 502 calls for an engineering study to be performed prior to any speed change. The study procedure should include input from enforcement and emergency services – extent not yet determined. A concern, for example, is that on rural interstates there may be areas where the emergency response takes too long. Higher speeds in any such location could result in accidents where serious injuries and fatalities increase significantly.
- An extra level of enforcement should coincide with increased speed limits on the interstate. Implementation therefore needs to be coordinated accordingly with the State Police or other police departments having jurisdiction.
- The differential between car and truck speeds would be a maximum of 10 mph and no truck speeds limits should be set above 60 mph.
- The speed in urban areas should remain at 55 mph. The definition of urban areas may be subject to negotiation, perhaps by traffic volume density and spacing of interchanges.
- Transition speed zones between 55 mph and 70 mph zones.
- Greater level of speed monitoring and if the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed becomes greater than 10% (*not* 10 mph) above a newly increased posted speed, then enforcement efforts should be increased. How long this option would be given isn't clear. If enforcement doesn't lower the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed to below 10% over the new posted speed, the speed limit is to revert to the previously posted speed.

The committee discussed these points and provided input to Ed to use in his meeting with the Governor.

## Sign Policy and Guidelines

Orville Gaylor then went through the latest changes to the Sign Policy and Guidelines from a handout. And asked for committee approval. The committee agreed the downward arrow diagram include a specification for the downward tilt angle. Sam Johnston noted a rather narrow sign and the committee agreed it was in error.

Decision: The committee voted to approve the changes to the Sign Policy as modified on the arrow angle specification and corrections to dimensions of one sign without objection.

Standards for Photo Enforcement Signs - Orville said they have made some designs up and sent to the field for review. There are 3 different signs. They will be brought out for decision in the next policy update.

Action Item: The committee agreed to have 4" letter height for signs on city streets as an agenda item for the next meeting.

## Signal Timing and Photo Red Light Enforcement

Ed Fischer asked if the committee think it's appropriate for statewide guidance to cities who may choose to implement photo enforcement. Consistency and uniformity would be a goal. Timing is an issue (clearance interval). Progression can also be an issue. Rick Wood discussed signal timing as practiced by ODOT and local jurisdictions, as well as guidance provided by the ITE. Ed said his idea of guidelines isn't to be specific

or prescriptive. There are other things in the way of guidance, perhaps a simple checklist of things that should be considered. On state highways there may be a more prescriptive process. One of his concern is that if there are some locations that are set up in such a way as to attract negative public press, or political attention, we may lose the chance to do something positive for traffic safety.

Decision: The committee consensus was to go forward with the project. Rick Wood and his subcommittee for the Supplements to the MUTCD will work on this and bring it back to the committee.

### **Legislative Wrap-Up**

Ed Fischer handed out a summary sheet of bills of interest that did make it through the legislative process. He said he'd answer any questions that might come up after the meeting.

### **Joint OTCDC / ACTS Meeting in October**

Gary Judd reminded the committee of the October meeting in Bend at the Inn at the Seventh Mountain in conjunction with the ACTS Safety Conference. The committee discussed and agreed to skip their September meeting, in view of the October 24<sup>th</sup> meeting in Bend, and to decide at that meeting whether the November meeting is needed.

### **Non-Agenda Items**

Ed remarked that this may be Mike Wilson's last meeting due to his imminent retirement as Traffic Engineer for the City of Bend. He nominated Robin Lewis, Mike's replacement in Bend to replace him on the committee. Concurrence will be requested from the League of Oregon Cities (LOC).

The meeting Adjourned at: 12:20 p.m.

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. in conjunction with the ACTS meeting in Bend.