

TEO TTC Committee – Quarterly Meeting Minutes

October 30, 2012 - Arden Hills Training Center

CO Members:	Greater MN Members:	Metro Members:	Guests:
X - Ken Johnson	- Jim Miles D1	X - Tiffany Dagon	X – Kathy Schaefer
X - Ted Ulven	X - David Mavec D1	X - Heather Gardner	
X - Michelle Moser	- Todd Larson D2	X - Mike Engh	
X - Craig Mittelstadt	- Jerilyn Swenson D3	X - Kevin Farraher	
X - Leigh Kriewall	- Tom Dumont D3	X - Sheila Johnson	
X - Bob Vasek	- Justin Knopf D4	X - Dave Tody	
X - Sue Lorentz	- Jeff Rieder D6	- Jeff Gibbons	
X - Todd Haglin	X - Luke Bourassa D6	- Ed Barrett	
	X - Scott Thompson D7	X - John McClellan	
	- Brad Bruegger D7		
	- Jeff Knofczynski D8		
	- Mike Lownsbury D8		

DISCUSSION TOPICS (Updates, new business, and questions for the committee):

Member List Update:

Luke Bourassa of District 6 Rochester Traffic replaces Tom Miles who is now in Construction.

Action Item: Ted will update the member list and post it to the website.

Minutes from the May meeting:

The minutes and action items from the last meeting were reviewed and approved.

Office of Maintenance’s plan for a research project to evaluate supplemental devices used in flagging operations and determine the most effective:

Bob Vasek described their effort to initiate this research project. A next fiscal year start, July 2013, is expected but there is much to do now. A needs statement and device selection will have to be determined. A Technical Advisory Panel will be established drawing mostly from this committee’s members. Dave Mavec and Craig Mittelstadt have already volunteered. Other discussion included: Craig mentioned some contractors are currently using an LED flasher on flagging paddles. Dave Mavec said they now have a TAPCO Blinking sign of the Flagger Ahead symbol as well as temporary rumble strips from Road Quake. There was some concern over sign clutter if we add too much to the WZ. It has been observed some motorists drive around rumbles and maybe the Rumble Strips with Arrow sign should be used. This is not a standard sign and will have to be specially ordered.

Action item: This project is ongoing. Other research needs were identified as being Lane Capacity, Diversion rates, and a queue warning proposal.

Possible Changes to the Zipper Merge Layout:

Ken Johnson described some concerns he had with observing motorists in WZ Zipper Merge locations. There still seems to be some confusion and inconsistency among the public. Some are not using the lane to the begin merge sign as is desired. The problem is drivers not knowing “Where to Merge”. Defining the Merge Point is difficult particularly with the standard Merge Symbol sign as it does not seem to be understood by drivers. Even among the committee there is a different comfort level with using the closed lane until the “last minute”. Early mergers and Late mergers stated their viewpoints. Some possible solutions for defining the Merge Point include the using the Merge arrow pavement marking, the Merge w/arrow sign, or the Federal sign that adds a distance to the Lane closed sign.

Action item: This issue will be discussed further.

Device sheeting and headlight glare:

Dave Tody described a concern from a motorist that our centerline tube delineators are difficult to see with the bright glare from the newer vehicle headlights. This seems to be a problem not just limited to work zones. Suggestions to improve the WZ included using TRPM’s and/or wet reflective pavement markings. Dave also demonstrated the new vertical panel channelizers that Metro will use to protect CMS’s and FAB’s when located on the shoulder. It is a TAPCO product, available with 20 or 30 lb weighted bases, and with the diamond grade sheeting, meets our specs for a type B channelizer.

Action item: Metro will test these devices and report back on their effectiveness.

Positive Protection requirement in MAP-21:

There is a requirement for Positive Protection in WZ’s where workers have “no escape”. The FHWA is currently in the rulemaking process for this provision.

Action item: Watch for this when it comes around for comments.

2012 WZ Process Feedback Meetings Results:

The review team visited Baxter, Detroit Lakes, Rochester, and Duluth this fall to gain feedback on our WZ process. A full report of the visits will be available soon.

Construction Information Sign update:

There was not time for Communications to get these signs included in the 2012 projects. They did take the committees advice for design, limiting them to a couple projects, and soliciting customer feedback. Karla Rains will set up a meeting with Metro and D1 to select two projects to test these on for 2013. Funding for the sign installations still has to be determined.

Action item: A further report will be made to the committee after the projects are selected.

Supplemental FAB’s in static lane closures:

Metro Maintenance has long used the “sequential chevron” on vehicles within a static lane closure. This occurs in other districts too and they generally feel it improves safety. There is some concern that this may not be correct and they should use the caution mode. The flashing arrow is thought to some to indicate an additional lane is closed. Others believe it just gives indication of the open lane and it is a useful supplement to the WZ having the same effect as a message board saying keep right. Some thought a static, non-flashing arrow would be better, but the MN MUTCD does not offer that option. There is also interest in using the arrow when in a shoulder closure, but that is expressly prohibited by the MN MUTCD.

Action item: Ken will take this issue to the TEO executive committee and seek a determination if these arrows may be used. OTST will discuss with the FHWA the merits of using the Arrow on the shoulder since Minnesota has a move over law for highway maintenance vehicles.

New Products update:

Michelle presented some new product approvals including a new surface sign mount for the small 2L2W signs, new cone sheeting, a portable signal system, and steel portable barrier. There was a question if the 45 and 90 degree bends are included and she will check on this. Several Districts are testing portable rumble strips, be sure to get an APL application to Michelle so that the testing may be considered the evaluation process. The DSD tech memo rewrite is underway.

Motorcycle Road Guard update:

Ken is on a multiagency committee to implement this legislation. Immediate needs are to define a group ride, determine how many riders make up one, and what kind of permit or notification should be required. There was much discussion: Will this conflict with temporary traffic control in construction and maintenance projects? Is a TMP needed for large rides if they cause a significant delay to motorists? Some are expected to be annual events and effects may be expected but there should still be notification. Should they follow the flagging layouts in the field manual? Delay times at crossings were considered. Five minutes was thought to be a reasonable delay for the public. Safety in the WZ's should be top priority. Other concerns were rides at night or inclement weather.

Action Item: Ken will report back to the committee at our next meeting.

Possible changes to the Safety and Mobility flow chart:

Ken observed that Maintenance may have to do TMP's if they are delaying traffic more than 15 minutes. Should the flow chart be altered? Metro indicated that if they exceed the allowable lane closures in the lane closure manual, they consult with Traffic. Traffic then "assumes" responsibility for what would be considered the TMP including any special layouts, public information, and mitigation.

Standard Sign Manual and Summary update:

There was not time to address this.

Action Item: Ted will continue to work on this and consult the committee with sign questions.

Round Robin:

- Sue Lorentz is hearing many complaints that our mobile lane closure is limited to 15 minutes. It appears to be a statewide issue particularly for Bridge Maintenance during bridge flushing. Shelia mentioned in Metro they occasionally exceed 15 minutes but they are documenting this and it is not a district wide practice. There is interest in looking at the FHWA typical applications and see if they allow more than 15 minutes in a mobile situation.
- Todd indicated that OSHA has received guidelines to do more work zone inspections. The districts might want to be aware of possible OSHA inspectors on their projects.

Next Regular Meeting: February 5, 2013 at Arden Hill Training Center Rm 11, 9:00 AM