

Pedestrian Issues in Work Zones Kick-Off Meeting Minutes

A meeting was held to discuss pedestrian issues in work zones on May 17, 2007 at 10 AM in the Traffic Control Conference Room, Century Center B. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for various groups/units to express their perspective on this issue and to decide how the Department will handle these challenges in the future. The following were in attendance:

Name	Representing
Tina Krasner	Attorney General's Office
Brad Hibbs, PE	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Mitch Hendee, PE	NCDOT Alternative Delivery Unit
Jeff Cox, PE	NCDOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Division
Michelle Long, PE	NCDOT Construction Unit
Queen Crittendon	NCDOT Office of Civil Rights & Business Development
Sharon Lipscomb	NCDOT Office of Civil Rights & Business Development
Judi Williams	NCDOT Office of Civil Rights & Business Development
Jennifer Evans, PE	NCDOT Planning Development Environmental Analysis (PDEA)
Marie Sutton	NCDOT Program Development Branch
Jay Bennett, PE	NCDOT Roadway Design Unit
Tim Williams, PE	NCDOT Signals Unit
Greg Perfetti, PE	NCDOT Structures Design Unit
Allen Raynor, PE	NCDOT Structure Design Unit
Kevin Lacy, PE	NCDOT Traffic Engineering Branch
Bucky Galloway, PE	NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit
Terry Hopkins, PE	NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit
Stuart Bourne, PE	NCDOT Work Zone Traffic Control Unit (WZTCU)
Joseph Ishak, PE	NCDOT Work Zone Traffic Control Unit
Jennifer Portanova, PE	NCDOT Work Zone Traffic Control Unit

Meeting Handouts:

- General Statute (GS) 136-30
- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) Sections (6D.01, 6D.02, 6F.13, 6F.58, 6F.68, 6H.28, 6H.29)
- FHWA Brochure "Accommodating Pedestrians in Work Zones"
- Aerial photos of project examples

BACKGROUND AND NCDOT HISTORY

According to GS 136-30, the MUTCD is North Carolina's official manual for the standardization of traffic control devices and must be used when designing a traffic control plan. The MUTCD was revised in 2003 to emphasize the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Chapter 6 of the MUTCD repeats the following standard several times throughout the chapter:

The needs and control of all road users (motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians within the highway, including persons with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Title II, Paragraph 35.130) through a TTC zone shall be an essential part of highway construction, utility work, maintenance operations, and the management of traffic incidents.

Recently, the Department has been confronted with how and to what extent to comply with to the "needs and control" of pedestrian traffic on several projects either already under construction or late in the design phase. Cost could be impacted significantly when issues are addressed this late. To complicate matters, the Department has no guidelines for maintaining pedestrians in the work zones and has had to rely exclusively on the requirements of the MUTCD.

VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Each group/unit was given an opportunity to share their perspective on this issue.

- **FHWA** supported the direction the Department was heading with either guidelines or policy. Guidelines/policy and good documentation of the engineering judgment used will help to address any future complaints. Other states are dealing with this same challenge.
- **Civil Rights** believed that the decision whether to maintain pedestrian traffic must be made through a community assessment to determine the impacts on the community. One way to assess a community is through the public involvement process. The Department is reviewing other ADA issues.
- **Attorney General** agreed that some type of guidelines or policy is needed. At this time, the content of what goes into a guideline/policy is more important than whether it is called guidelines or a policy.
- **Planning** thought the decision if/how to maintain pedestrian traffic needed to be made during planning so that cost is factored into the project and the engineering judgment is documented.
- **Design** agreed decisions made in planning will alleviate unplanned cost or environmental impacts.
- **Construction** pointed out any changes to the project cost during construction could have an impact on the competitive bidding practices and agreed that the decisions should be made during planning. Documented engineering judgment may help those administering the project address complaints.
- **Bikes and Peds** mentioned that the Department's Policy on permanent pedestrian facilities is under review and could possibly be revised.

SUMMARY OF MEETING

⇒ **Decisions on how/if to maintain pedestrian traffic should be made during planning**

⇒ **Documentation of engineering judgment is essential**

⇒ **Project cost could be affected but will be factored in during planning.**

⇒ **A technical group will meet to develop the guidelines/policy.**

Action Item: The WZTCU will contact meeting attendees to determine if they would like to participate on the technical group meeting and ask for a representative from their unit/group.

⇒ **Guidelines/Policy is needed to address the issue.**

The following are items that were discussed and can be considered by the technical group:

- A representative from public involvement and the ADA coordinator may need to be involved
- Setting characteristics for temporary pedestrian facilities, i.e. structures, sidewalks
- Pedestrian considerations for all project including bridge projects that do not normally go through the public involvement process
- Exceptions based on the cost of the temporary accommodations, i.e. spending more than 20% of total project cost is not economically feasible
- Develop a checklist of questions that help to make an engineering judgement on whether maintaining pedestrian traffic is warranted during construction
- An Education/Awareness Plan needed to educate the Department
- Consider effects of road closure on the number of pedestrians using the facility
- Consider the requirements of the FHWA Guide on "Access for Individuals with Disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of Title II of the ADA"

NEXT MEETING

A technical group meeting has been scheduled for **June 6, 2007 at 10 AM** in the Traffic Control Conference Room, Century Center B.