



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AGENDA
September 15, 2014 - 5:30 PM
City Hall Council Chambers

Committee of the Whole Meeting

1. Proposed Traffic Sign and Pavement Marking Installation & Maintenance Policy _____
2. *Proposed* 2015 Operating & Capital Budget Discussion _____
3. City Manager Reports _____

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Mayor and Council Communication

September 15, 2014

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SUBJECT: Proposed Traffic Sign and Pavement Marking Installation & Maintenance Policy

RECOMMENDATION: The Mayor and City Council are asked to review and comment on a proposed Traffic Sign and Pavement Marking Installation & Maintenance Policy.

BACKGROUND / KEY POINTS: Staff has drafted the above-referenced policy to establish procedures the City will use to manage the installation, modification, maintenance, and removal of traffic signs, pavement markings, and other traffic control devices (excluding traffic signals and roundabouts). The intent of the policy is to:

- document duties and responsibilities associated with the installation, modification, maintenance, and removal of traffic control devices;
- document standard operating procedures for the installation, modification, maintenance, and removal of traffic control devices (and parking restrictions), including procedures used to review requests for changes to traffic control devices received from the public;
- facilitate compliance with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requirements to implement and use an assessment or management method designed to maintain regulatory and warning signs at or above minimum levels of retroreflectivity; and
- enhance customer service through expedited processing and implementation (if appropriate) of public requests for the installation, modification, or removal of traffic control devices by delegating certain authorities to City staff.

The proposed policy governs the use of traffic control devices in accordance with statutory, regulatory, and technical requirements. The policy does not include traffic calming criteria and procedures. A draft traffic calming policy is being developed for future City Council consideration.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Much of the proposed policy provides clarification and streamlining of existing procedures. However, the FHWA requirements related to maintenance of retroreflectivity will have cost implications. These costs will be defined using data collected from the sign inventory which is expected to be complete by the end of 2016, if not sooner.

VOTING REQUIREMENTS: Not Applicable

Disclaimer: Voting requirements may be subject to changes in the law, parliamentary procedural matters, or other unforeseen issues. The City Attorney provides opinion on questions of voting requirements in accordance with the Moorhead City Code, Minnesota State Statutes, and parliamentary procedure.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Redlinger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Michael J. Redlinger
City Manager

Department: Engineering/Public Works
Prepared by: Robert A. Zimmerman, City Engineer
Steve Moore, Public Works Director

Attachments: Draft Policy



Traffic Sign and Pavement Marking Installation & Maintenance Policy

Article I. Purpose and Goal.

The purpose of this policy is to establish the procedures the City will use to manage the installation, modification, maintenance, and removal of traffic signs, pavement markings, and other traffic control devices; including implementation of a management and/or assessment process to satisfy minimum sign retroreflectivity requirements in the *Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MN MUTCD)*.

The goal of this policy is to improve public safety on the City's streets and prioritize the City's limited resources to install, maintain, and replace signs, pavement markings, and other traffic control devices.

Article II. Applicable Signs.

This policy applies to all signs, including pavement markings and other traffic control devices, governed by the *MN MUTCD* and installed on public right-of-way within City limits. Throughout this policy, the term "traffic control device" shall be interpreted as "sign, pavement marking, or other traffic control device" but, in general, shall not include traffic signals and roundabouts.

Article III. Resource Materials

The City has relied on numerous resources in developing this policy. These resource materials include, but are not limited to, the following:

- *Minnesota Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MN MUTCD)*, Minnesota Department of Transportation (most current version).
- *Minnesota Statutes Annotated, Chapter 169*.
- *Methods for Maintaining Traffic Sign Retroreflectivity*, Publication No. FHWA-HRT-08-026, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (November 2007).
- *Sign Retroreflectivity Guidebook*, Publication No. FHWA-CFL/TD-09-005, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (September 2009).
- *Sign Retroreflectivity: A Minnesota Toolkit*, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Local Road Research Board (June 2010).
- *Traffic Sign Maintenance/Management Handbook*, Report No. 2010RIC10, Version 1.1, Minnesota Department of Transportation (October 2010).

- *LMCIT Sign Retroreflectivity Memo and Model Policy*, League of Minnesota Cities (Final Edition, March 2014).
- *Traffic Sign Life Expectancy*, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Local Road Research Board (June 2014).
- *Technical Memorandum 13-13-T-03*, Minnesota Department of Transportation (July 2013).

Article IV. Installation & Removal of Signs

In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 169:

- the City Council is the local authority with responsibility for placement and maintenance of traffic control devices on City right-of-way,
- MnDOT is the authority with responsibility for placement and maintenance of traffic control devices on State and Federal Trunk Highway right-of-way,
- Clay County is the authority with responsibility for placement and maintenance of traffic control devices on County road and highway right-of-way, and
- All traffic control devices installed in public right-of-way must conform to the *MN MUTCD*.

Because traffic control devices must be compliant with legal and technical criteria, and in order to enhance customer service through more timely responses to public inquiries regarding needs for traffic control, the City Council delegates authority for the installation, modification, and/or removal of traffic control devices covered by this policy to the City Engineer. This delegation is subject to the following conditions:

- Expenditures for the installation, modification, and/or removal of traffic control devices must be within budgetary appropriations approved by the City Council.
- The installation and/or removal of traffic signals and roundabouts must be authorized by City Council action.
- The City Council may, at its discretion, direct staff to bring certain proposals to install, modify, or remove a traffic control device before the City Council for consideration subsequent to the development of a recommendation provided by the City Engineer.

The installation, modification, and/or removal of traffic control devices will be conducted in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

- 1) Requests for, or related to, traffic calming will be processed through the City's Traffic Calming Policy. Traffic control devices (e.g. stop signs) will not be installed for traffic calming purposes.
- 2) All traffic control devices placed within City right-of-way must meet the requirements of the *MN MUTCD* and be approved by the City Engineer in accordance with this policy. Where authorized or required by the City Engineer, privately installed traffic control devices located on public right-of-way are the responsibility of the entity that has been granted permission or required to install the device.

- 3) In conjunction with infrastructure projects (e.g. new construction, rehabilitation, or reconstruction), City staff will implement traffic control device installation, modification, and/or removal through plans and specifications for the project. These changes will not be subject to the review process outlined below.
- 4) In conjunction with routine operations and maintenance responsibilities, City staff may identify potential changes to traffic control devices. Identified issues will be processed as outlined below.
- 5) The public may request installation, modification, and/or removal of traffic control devices. In order to document and track public requests, and avoid duplication of effort for repeat requests, the City has established an on-line request form. All requests for changes to traffic control must be submitted using this on-line form. City staff will provide assistance for any member of the public that requests or requires assistance in completing the form.
- 6) The City Engineer, and/or his/her designee, will review each request for compliance and consistency with applicable traffic laws, engineering standards/guidance provided in the *MN MUTCD*, and other reference documents and/or research reports.
 - a. In reviewing each request, consideration will be given, where appropriate and/or available, to on-site observations, traffic volumes, speed data, vehicle crash history obtained from the State of Minnesota Crash Mapping Analysis Tool, consistency with existing or precedence for future traffic controls, street operations and maintenance conflicts, cost, and professional engineering judgment.
 - b. If the request is initiated by the public, staff will contact the requester to gather information and clarification, as needed.
 - c. A draft report with recommendations will be developed. These recommendations may include the requested action, a modification of the requested action, or denial of the requested action.
- 7) A traffic technical committee comprised of City staff members from the Engineering Department, Police Department, and Public Works Department will review the draft report. Recommendations from the committee will be incorporated into the final report.
- 8) The City Engineer will approve the final report and provide the recommendations to the Public Works Director for implementation. If the report addresses a request from the public, the requesting party will be provided with the report or a summary thereof.

Various studies have found that excess road signage reduces the effectiveness of traffic control devices resulting in reduced safety, and imposes an unnecessary financial burden on road authorities. Therefore, the City's policy is to consider removal of signs, pavement markings, and/or other traffic control devices which are not required to comply with an applicable Federal or State regulation or statute and which have been determined to be unnecessary for safety purposes. The removal of excess signage shall be based on an engineering study using the procedures outlined above.

Studies have also found that various non-standard signs (e.g. Children At Play) are ineffective. Therefore, non-standard signs, defined as any sign not included in the *MN MUTCD*, will not be

installed within the City, and may be removed at any time, without review through the above-described process.

The hierarchy below is designed to prioritize the level of retroreflectivity for signs necessary for safe traffic operations compared to signs used for informational purposes.

- The City will use ASTM Type XI sheeting material for all new and replacement regulatory signs with *MN MUTCD* Code R1, R5, R6, and signs with a fluorescent yellow green legend.
- The City will use ASTM Type IV as the minimum retroreflectivity for all other signs, except for signs exempt from retroreflectivity as listed in Article VI.
- The City will use ASTM Type I sheeting material for signs exempt from retroreflectivity as listed in Article VI.

Article V. Parking Signs

City Code specifies various standards for street width that facilitate and/or restrict parking (i.e. no parking, parking on one side, parking on both sides, etc.). Following construction of a new street, parking signs are installed consistent with these standards. In addition, parking signs are installed to serve specific public purposes (e.g. street maintenance, refuse/recyclable collection, snow removal, mail delivery, etc). The general presumption is that parking should be allowed where funds have been expended to construct a street of sufficient width to accommodate parking.

In conjunction with routine operations and maintenance responsibilities, or to address changing traffic conditions, the City may initiate changes to parking restrictions. In addition, the City may conduct comprehensive neighborhood parking studies and establish parking restrictions based on the recommendations of those studies.

The public may also request changes to parking. The installation, modification, and/or removal of parking restrictions in response to public requests will be conducted in accordance with the procedure outlined below.

- 1) To initiate a request, a petition for a change in parking status must be completed and submitted.
 - a. The petition form is intended to provide evidence of general support for the change and minimize the expenditure of City resources on requests that are not widely supported.
 - b. Petitions must be signed by at least 60% of the property owners of record in the affected area (e.g. the block or blocks where the change is requested), including property owners on both sides of the street.
 - c. Renters, employees, and businesspersons that are not property owners may also sign the petition with a designation distinguishing them from the legal property owner and identifying their relationship to the affected properties.
- 2) The City Engineer, and/or his/her designee, will review each request for compliance and consistency with standards for street width contained in City Code and/or other public

purposes which may govern the need for the existing parking status. If there is a governing public purpose and/or policy, the requested change will be denied.

- 3) If there is no governing public purpose, or if there is a potential for reasonable modification, a parking committee comprised of City staff members from the Engineering Department, Police Department, Public Works Department, and Planning & Neighborhood Services Department will review the request and make a recommendation including specific reason(s) supporting the recommendation.
- 4) The recommendation will be forwarded to the petitioners.
- 5) The City Engineer will approve and forward the final recommendation to the Public Works Director for implementation, if appropriate.

Article VI. Sign Inventory and Approved Sign Evaluation Method

This article applies to all regulatory, warning, and guide signs as set forth in the *MN MUTCD*.

Pursuant to Section 2A.8 of the *MN MUTCD*, the City excludes the following signs from the retroreflectivity maintenance guidelines:

- A. Parking, Standing, and Stopping signs (R7 and R8 series),
- B. Walking/Hitchhiking/Crossing signs (R9 series, R10-1 through R10-4b),
- C. Acknowledgment signs, including Memorial signs,
- D. All signs with blue or brown backgrounds, and
- E. Bikeway signs that are intended for exclusive use by bicyclists or pedestrians.

To satisfy *MN MUTCD* requirements, and meet the City's goal of maintaining sign retroreflectivity above certain levels, the City will maintain a sign inventory of all new or replacement signs installed after the effective date of this policy. The inventory shall indicate the type of sign, the location of the sign, the date of installation or replacement, and any maintenance performed on the sign.

For existing signs, the City will complete an inventory of all signs covered by this policy. The City recognizes this process will occur over time subject to the City's monetary and staff resources. The City shall record the above information related to new and existing signs to the extent that such information is known and shall also include a statement on the general condition of the sign, if appropriate.

Substantial conformance with the *MN MUTCD* is achieved by adopting a method to maintain minimum retroreflectivity levels. Conformance does not require or guarantee that every individual sign in the City will meet or exceed the minimum retroreflectivity levels at every point in time.

Through this policy, the City adopts the following process to comply with the minimum sign retroreflectivity requirements in the *MN MUTCD*:

Expected Sign Life.

- The installation date is recorded when a sign is installed so that the age of any given sign is known. The age of the sign is compared to the expected sign life. The expected sign life

is based on the experience of sign retroreflectivity degradation in the City and appropriate reference documents. Signs older than the expected life will be replaced. The City adopts a sign life of 15 years for all signs.

- The City may use measurements of sign retroreflectivity to verify that signs exceeding the expected sign life must be replaced. A sign exceeding the expected sign life may be left in service if the sign complies with minimum retroreflectivity requirements. If, based on field measurement, a sign may be left in service beyond the expected sign life, regularly scheduled follow-up measurement will be implemented and/or or future replacement will be scheduled (e.g. in the City's Pavement Management and Transportation Improvement Plan).

Article VII. Sign Replacement

Priority shall be given to regulatory and warning signs on roads with higher vehicle usage and signs that serve a direct and essential safety function. Damaged, stolen, or missing signs (of any type) will be replaced as soon as practicable.

After the initial replacement of signs or the installation of new signs, the City shall, for the purpose of complying with the requirements of the *MN MUTCD*, maintain minimum retroreflectivity standards as budgetary factors allow, by replacing signs as they reach the end of the latter of their (a) expected life for the sheeting material used on the sign or (b) expected life as determined by an engineering study.

Article VIII. Pavement Marking

Pavement markings must satisfy or exceed the standards defined in the *MN MUTCD*. Normal operations and maintenance practices and winter conditions can severely damage and may even obliterate markings such that winter and spring time pavement markings can have little or no measurable retroreflectivity. In some cases, presence (regardless of retroreflectivity) after the winter season is considered a successful marking application. Pavement marking replacement is limited to seasonal cycles making it impractical and cost-prohibitive to perform maintenance during winter months. Therefore, it is not possible to maintain pavement marking minimum retroreflectivity levels for all markings at all times under all conditions. Pavement marking installation and maintenance is performed, and prioritized as necessary, within the City's budgetary capacity.

Expected Pavement Marking Life

Experience has shown that traffic volumes and snow and ice operations have the greatest impact on the performance of pavement markings. The following chart outlines the life expectancy of various materials based on traffic volumes.

Material	Average Daily Traffic (ADT)	
	<1,500	>1,500
Latex Paint	>1 year	1 year
Epoxy (Plural Component Liquid)	>5 years	3-5 years
Preformed Polymer Tape	>5 years	>5 years

Wet Weather Performing Materials and Processes

New pavement marking materials and processes that provide improved performance during wet weather at night are becoming available. These materials and processes may be substituted for the traditional materials outlined in this Policy

Article IX. Responsibilities

The Engineering Department is responsible for the following:

- Coordinate installation of new and/or revised traffic control devices in conjunction with improvement projects.
- Review and process requests for the installation of new, or modification of existing, traffic control devices.
- Perform traffic counts and studies to facilitate the installation of new, or modification of existing, traffic control devices.
- Make recommendations to the traffic technical committee for the installation of new, or modification of existing, traffic control devices.

The Public Works Department will be responsible for the following:

- Maintenance of all traffic control devices.
- Maintenance of the sign inventory database including date of sign installation, modification, or replacement due to routine maintenance, knock-downs, or vandalism.
- Installation and removal of traffic control devices approved by the City Engineer.

Article X. Modification and Deviation from Policy

The City reserves the right to modify this policy at any time if deemed to be in the best interest of the City based on safety, social, political, and economic considerations.

The City Engineer and/or Public Works Director, or his/her designee, may authorize a deviation from the implementation of this policy with respect to a particular traffic control device when deemed to be in the best interest of the City based on safety, social, political, and economic considerations. Such deviation shall be documented and include information supporting the deviation.

PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY MUNICIPAL SERVICES IN A GROWING COMMUNITY: ACTION PLAN

2015 PROPOSED BUDGET FOCUS

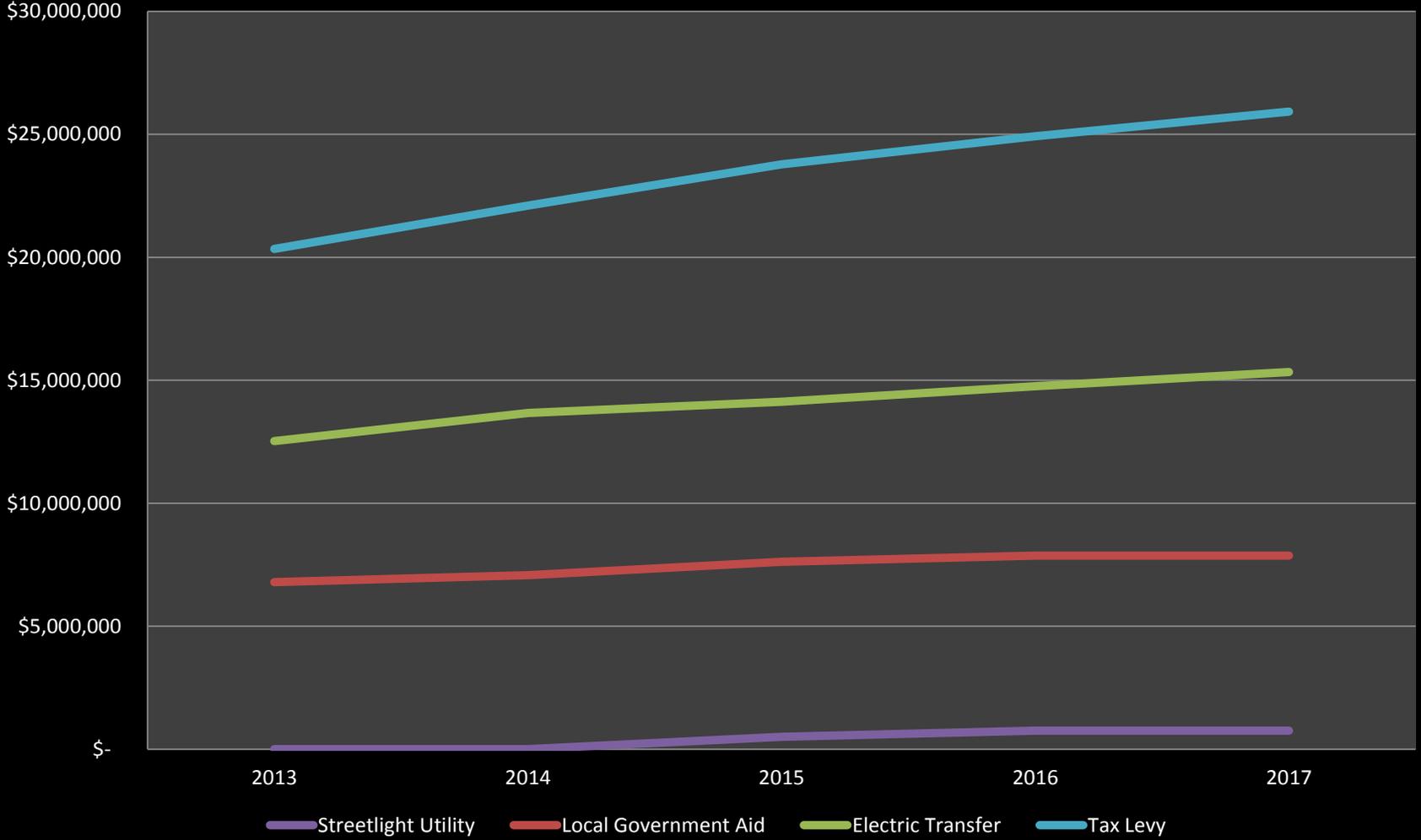
- Moorhead is a growing community
- Citizens have expectations for service delivery
- Meeting those service level expectations requires a minimum level of expenditures
- The 2015 budget as proposed provides resources to continue providing these quality services to the citizens of Moorhead

**MAJOR LOCAL REVENUE SOURCES
TAX SUPPORTED FUNDS**

Revenue Source	2014	Proposed 2015	Forecast	
			2016	2017
Tax Levy	\$ 8,437,376	\$ 9,652,974	\$ 10,155,680	\$ 10,584,699
Electric Transfer - Base	\$ 6,050,900	\$ 6,512,738	\$ 6,895,732	\$ 7,473,213
Electric Transfer - 1-Time	\$ 541,000			
Streetlight Utility	\$ -	\$ 500,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000
TOTAL	\$ 15,031,290	\$ 16,665,712	\$ 17,803,428	\$ 18,809,929

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City Council Desired Level of Municipal Services: Action Plan



Agenda Item #2.

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