



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices RWSTC RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWING SPONSOR COMMENTS

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: NCUTCD Regulatory/Warning Signs Technical Committee

DATE OF ACTION: (TASK FORCE): January 3, 2011
TASK FORCE: Dan Paddick (chair), Tom Heydel, Ron Lipps, Jim Pline, Andy Ramisch, Roger Wentz, Mark Bott, Scott Kuznicki, Fred Ranck
RWSTC APPROVAL DATE: 1-19-11
TRANSMITTAL TO SPONSORS DATE: Spring 2011
RWSTC APPROVAL DATE FOLLOWING SPONSOR COMMENTS: 6-22-11
COUNCIL APPROVAL DATE: 6-23-11

TOPIC: Size of Warning Signs on Ramps

AFFECTED PORTIONS OF MUTCD: Section 2C.04 Table 2C-2 (2009 MUTCD)

BACKGROUND:

In its review of the 2009 MUTCD, the Regulatory and Warning Sign Technical Committee (RWSTC) noted a number of areas of concern. One of these was the size of the warning signs on single lane ramps on Expressways and Freeways in Section 2C.04(07) Size of Warning Signs. This Section states that “The minimum size for all diamond-shaped warning signs facing traffic on exit and entrance ramps should be the size identified in Table 2C-2 for the mainline roadway classification (Expressway or Freeway). If a minimum size is not provided in the Freeway Column, the Expressway size should be used. If a minimum size is not provided in the Freeway or the Expressway Column, the Oversized size should be used.” It was felt by the RWSTC, that while using the mainline roadway classification made sense on Freeway or Expressway connections to Freeways or Expressways, it did not make sense on most other ramps.

The size of the warning signs to be used on ramps was not addressed in Section 2C.04 Size of Warning Signs in the 2003 MUTCD or in the 2007 NPA.

DISCUSSION:

Except on Freeway to Freeway connections, the operating characteristics of a single lane ramp are closer to that of a single lane conventional roadway than that of a Freeway. Recommending that Freeway or Expressway size signs be used throughout the length of all ramps connecting a Freeway or Expressway to a normal intersecting road seems to be

43 excessive. Many States, including New York, Wisconsin, Michigan and Idaho use
44 smaller than mainline size signs on ramps that do not connect Expressways or Freeways
45 to Expressways or Freeways. The recommendation that the larger size signs be used on
46 single lane ramps was not included in the 2003 MUTCD or in the 2007 NPA but was
47 added in the Final Rulemaking. Consequently, the States were not given the
48 opportunity to comment on this recommendation.

49
50 Away from the Freeway or Expressway mainline, the sightline characteristics of a
51 single lane ramp are essentially the same as a single lane conventional road. The normal
52 travel speed is less than the mainline speed and close to that of a single lane conventional
53 road. Traffic normally decelerates on an exiting ramp knowing that a traditional
54 controlled intersection is ahead. Traffic generally accesses the beginning of an entering
55 ramp through a traditional controlled intersection. This generally results in lower traffic
56 speeds. These lower speeds, when combined with single lane conventional road
57 sightlines do not require the larger size signs associated with a Freeway or an
58 Expressway.

59
60 **RECOMMENDATION: Amend Section 2C.04 to allow the use of single lane**
61 **conventional road size signs on ramps that connect Expressways or Freeways to**
62 **intersections with conventional roadway.**

63
64 **Note: Proposed changes to the MUTCD are shown in underline red and removed**
65 **text are shown in ~~strikethrough red~~.**

66
67 **RECOMMENDED WORDING:**

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69 **Section 2C.04 Size of Warning Signs**

70 **Standard:**

71 **01 Except as provided in Section 2A.11, the sizes for warning signs shall be as shown**
72 **in Table 2C-2.**

73 **Support:**

74 **02 Section 2A.11 contains information regarding the applicability of the various columns**
75 **in Table 2C-2.**

76 **Standard:**

77 **03 Except as provided in Paragraph 5, the minimum size for all diamond-shaped**
78 **warning signs facing traffic on a multi-lane conventional road where the posted**
79 **speed limit is higher than 35 mph shall be 36 x 36 inches.**

80 **04 The minimum size for supplemental warning plaques that are not included in**
81 **Table 2C-2 shall be as shown in Table 2C-3.**

82 **Option:**

83 **05 If a diamond-shaped warning sign is placed on the left-hand side of a multi-lane**
84 **roadway to supplement the installation of the same warning sign on the right-hand side of**
85 **the roadway, the minimum size identified in the Single Lane column in Table 2C-2 may**
86 **be used.**

87 **06 Signs and plaques larger than those shown in Tables 2C-2 and 2C-3 may be used (see**
88 **Section 2A.11).**

89 *Guidance:*
90 07 *The minimum size for all diamond-shaped warning signs facing traffic on exit and*
91 *entrance ramps at major interchanges connecting an Expressway or Freeway with an*
92 *Expressway or Freeway (see Section 2E.32.A(a)) should be the size identified in Table*
93 *2C-2 for the mainline roadway classification (Expressway or Freeway). If a minimum*
94 *size is not provided in the Freeway Column, the Expressway size should be used. If a*
95 *minimum size is not provided in the Freeway or the Expressway Column, the Oversized*
96 *size should be used.*

97 *Guidance:*
98 *08 The minimum size for all diamond-shaped warning signs facing traffic on exit and*
99 *entrance ramps at all other interchanges (see Section 2E.32.A(b) B and C,) should be*
100 *36" by 36".*

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104 RWSTC VOTE: For: Unanimous

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106 COUNCIL VOTE: For: Unanimous

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108 C:\ncutcd\January 2011\Agenda item III.h Section2C04SizeofWarningSignsRampSigns
109 1-19-11 ready for sponsors, 6-22-11 following sponsor comments, 6-23-11