

REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



To: Edina Transportation Commission

Agenda Item #: VI. E.

From: Joseph Totten, Traffic Safety Coordinator

Action

Discussion

Date: January 15, 2015

Information

Subject: Traffic Safety Committee Report of January 7, 2015

Action Requested:

Review and recommend Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) Report of Wednesday January 7, 2015, be forwarded to City Council for approval.

Information / Background:

It is not anticipated that residents will be in attendance at the meeting. An overview of the comments from the Edina Transportation Commission (ETC) will be included in the staff report provided to Council for their February 17, 2015 meeting.

Attachments:

Traffic Safety Committee Report for January 7, 2015.

Traffic Safety Report

Wednesday, January 07, 2015

The Traffic Safety Committee (TSC) review of traffic safety matters occurred on January 07. The City Engineer, Public Works Director, Transportation Planner, Traffic Safety Coordinator, Sign Coordinator, and a Police Lieutenant were in attendance for this meeting. The Assistant City Planner was also consulted on the issues.

From these reviews, the recommendations below are provided. On each of the items, persons involved have been contacted and staff recommendation has been discussed with them. They were informed that if they disagree with the recommendation or have additional facts to present, they can be included on the January 15 Edina Transportation Commission and the February 17 City Council agenda.

Section A: Items on which the Traffic Safety Committee recommends approval

A1. Request for a reduction of speeds on Malibu Drive at Malibu Drive, a street name placard for the intersection, and a renaming of the street

This request comes from a resident of Malibu Drive, south of the intersection where Malibu Drive starts to branch off into three separate cul-de-sacs, all named Malibu Drive. The requestor is concerned with speeds on Malibu Drive, believing that high speeds at the intersection and nearby hill lead to a dangerous roadway. The requestor also asks for a nameplate for Malibu Drive in order for visitors, deliveries, and school buses to find the homes in the southern cul-de-sac easier. Finally, the requestor asks that the cul-de-sac be renamed. As a numbered nameplate would not feel neighborly, and requested that the city look into a new name for the entire cul-de-sac to clarify confusion.



Map : Malibu Drive at Malibu Drive

After review, staff recommends placing of a street name placard to signify the house numbers within this cul-de-sac, as well as other cul-de-sacs on Malibu drive which are not a continuation of the main road. This decision was based on guidance from Public Safety and the difficulty to find some addresses in this area. Staff will advise the requestor to bring to City Council a resolution to change the street name if they wish. In regards to the speeding in this area, the attempted speed counts failed due to weather and low traffic conditions, but the police do seasonally enforce this area and a speed study of this area will be conducted in the spring to more efficiently enforce speeds.

A2. Request for signage to make clear that the parking bay on 50th, west of Wooddale, is not a right turn lane for eastbound traffic

This request comes from a resident who drives 50th street often. The concern is that in low light, drivers begin a merge into the parking bay west of the intersection with Wooddale, and when they recognize that the lane does not continue until the intersection the drivers will swerve back into the right lane. The requestor would like some signage or painted curb which would reflect back to drivers to signify that this is not a driving lane. Currently there is a concrete gutterpan between the parking bay and the driving lane, signifying this is not a typical roadway segment. There is no reflector or other sign to signify the end of the parking bay. A video study was performed, and this procedure was observed, however only one half of the drivers who infringe on the parking lane turned right at the intersection. This indicated the issue is more likely due to people simply drifting into the lane. An appropriate sign would be from the object marker (OM) series, either a class 2 or class 3 marker to signify the end of the parking bay.



Map : 50th Street at Wooddale Avenue, parking bays.

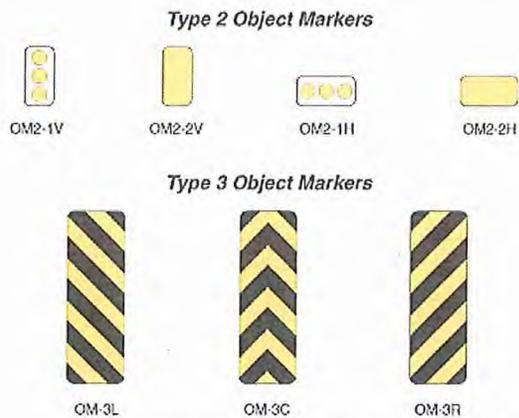


Image : Type 2 and 3 Object Markers

After review, staff recommends approval of this request. Staff recommends placement of a OM-3R object marker to signify the end of the parking bay. While this may not prevent all of these encroachments from occurring, it has the ability to warn drivers sooner than current conditions.

A3. Request for further safety enhancements to the 50th and France midblock pedestrian crossings

This request comes from the business association at 50th and France, noting the ineffectiveness of the continuous flashers along 50th St. and the signed only crosswalks along 49th ½ St. On 50th Street, the east crossing was observed, with less than two gaps per five minutes in the typical peak hour. Most westbound traffic yielded to pedestrians waiting to cross, or in the crosswalk. On 49th ½ St. there were 4.5 gaps in the typical five minute segment. Both of these meet warrants for improvement to actuated pedestrian signals. In addition, on 50th Street, the street light immediately before the east crossing obstructs the current flashers with a place-making banner. 50th St. is considered an augmenter arterial in the city's 2008 Comprehensive Plan (an A level arterial), which according to the City's sidewalk policy would require some sort of signalization for installation of a crosswalk. Research has shown that continuous flashers do not increase long term pedestrian safety, as drivers grow accustomed to their presence. Pedestrian actuated flashers have higher rates of yielding as they are not flashing except when drivers are expected to yield. The city's crosswalk policy is located in Appendix B.



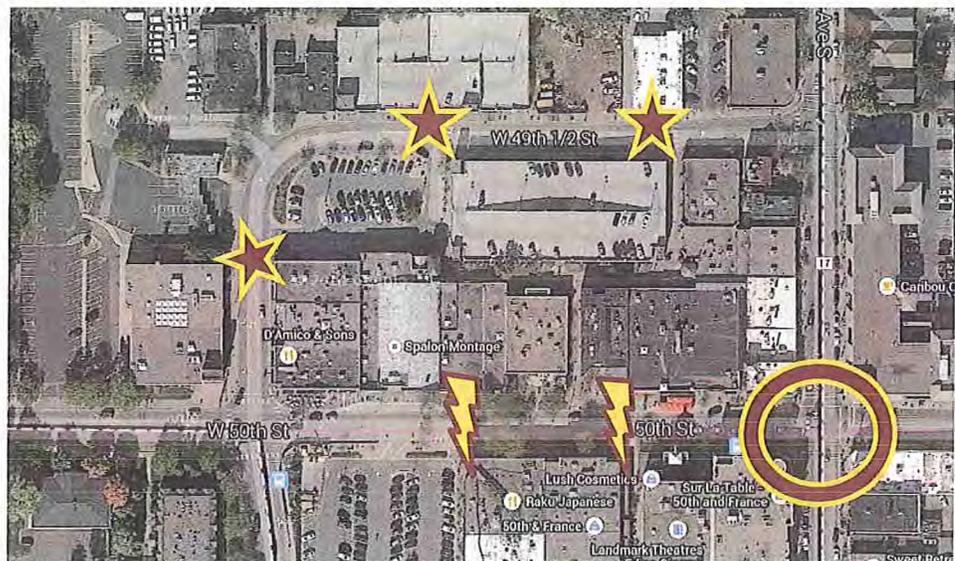
Photo : 50th and France area, current crosswalk on 49th 1/2



Photo : 50th and France area, current crosswalk on 50th



Photo : 50th and France area, current crosswalk on 50th.
Note the beacon is obstructed by the light.



Map : 50th and France area, stars are locations of crosswalks with static signs, continuous beacons are marked with lightning, and the intersection of 50th and France is circled.

After review, staff recommends a split approval of this request. Staff recommends that pedestrian push-button actuation and Rapid Rectangular Flashing Beacons be placed on the two crossings on 50th Street. Further study is needed on how many beacons can be placed in close proximity, and if all of the three crosswalks that are starred in the image above meet the warrants for pedestrian actuation. Thus the crosswalks on 49th ½ St. will be an item on a future report, and are not recommended for approval here.

A4. Request for handicapped parking restriction in front of 3100 60th Street (60th Street at Xerxes)

This request comes from a resident who is concerned at the frequency with which the stairs to her house are blocked by disabled vehicles. This concern stems from the requestor's daughter having a disability, and the steps being the only reliably safe way for her to access the house (alley gets icy and is harder to keep clear than the front walk). Therefore, the requestor asked for the implementation of a handicapped parking zone, such that a school bus front door could line up with her steps, facilitating her daughter's movements to and from school.



Map : 60th and Xerxes, city boundary is marked, and the area for the parking restriction is circled



Photo : Stairs which should be left clear for schoolbuses and other handicapped accessible vehicles

After review, staff recommends approval, installing the signs in this location in the spring.

Section B : Items on which the Traffic Safety Committee recommends denial

B1. Request for a “No Right Turn on Red” restriction on Cecelia Circle/ Delaney Boulevard at 78th Street

This request comes from a property owner on 78th Street, who says tenants in the building have trouble turning out of the driveway due to Cecelia traffic turning right on red, removing gaps. A gap study was performed, and during evening rush hour left turns would have been restricted such that acceptable gaps would not be present for 5 minutes. However, this lack of gaps was not due to right on red, but instead due to the queue from the light at 78th and Cahill blocking the property’s driveway. When vehicles were exiting the driveway, vehicles in the queue were courteous and allowed exiting vehicles to turn. After further study, it was found that right turns on red from Cecelia correlated slightly with a greater number of acceptable vehicle gaps, and the main correlation with a reduced number of acceptable gaps was the 15-minute volumes. Graphs of these correlations can be seen in Appendix A.

After review, staff noted that the volume and timing of the light at Cahill were larger detriments to the area than right turns on red at Cecelia Cir., and thus recommends denial of this request.



Map : 78th Street, between Cecelia and Cahill



Photo : 78th Street, looking east from Cecelia

B2. Request for roadway expansion on 70th Street, at Highway 100

This request comes from a parishioner at the church in the northeast corner of this intersection. The requestor believes that at peak hours, as well as after church functions most of the traffic that is westbound is trying to turn onto Highway 100 northbound, and thus the roadway should be expanded to accommodate a right-turn-only lane. A study of the intersection from 8 AM to 6 PM, found that during morning peak hours, it is not unusual for more vehicles to be turning right than going straight at this intersection. The study also found that this behavior of traffic does not continue past the noon hour, with significantly more through traffic than right turns in the afternoon and evening. Overall 42 percent of all traffic in this location was turning right. The current layout of the approach has one through lane and one shared lane for through and right turning traffic.



Map : 70th and Normandale/Trunk Highway 100, the location of the proposed turn lane.

After review, staff recommends denial of this request based on the fact that the queue of vehicles typically clears during the signal phase.

Section C : Items which staff recommended for further study

C1. Request for pedestrian actuation for the pedestrian crossing at Chapel Lane and Valley View Road

This request comes from a resident who is concerned for safety during morning hours as school enters session. The concern is that left turning vehicles from westbound Valley View Road to southbound Chapel Lane obstruct the views of children crossing the street. When investigated, a person in the crosswalk was unable to be seen by drivers while they were at the required stopping sight distance, for approximately the central third of the roadway.



Map : Valley View Road and Chapel Lane

After review, staff recommended further study of this issue. Observations for this report were unable to observe several crossings due to the severe cold, or precipitation. A video study and gap analysis is recommended to be performed when the weather is warmer.

C2. Request for removal of the crosswalk on 50th Street at Eden Avenue

This request comes from a resident, who lives in the Grandview Area. The requestor states that the crosswalk that is present in this location is inadequate for safety of pedestrians. The crosswalk is marked with special, brick style, pavement markings and static signs. The crosswalk does not meet the Crosswalk Policy, as the policy states that crosswalks will not be placed on arterial roads unless in conjunction with signalization, and the 2008 Comprehensive Plan for the city has 50th St. labeled as an Augmenter Arterial (A-minor arterial). There are two crashes in this location within the last five years, but neither was an accident type that would indicate a pedestrian was involved. The city's crosswalk policy is located in Appendix B.



Photo : Crosswalk at 50th and Eden



Map : Crosswalk at 50th and Eden, city hall is shown in the lower left corner of the map.

After review, staff recommends further study (a full gap analysis) to ensure that the area met warrants for the addition of an actuated signal.

Section D: Other Traffic Safety Issues Handled

D1 : Requestor called in that the new development at Grove and Tracy fails to meet required sight distances. Staff investigated the area and found that a redevelopment had improved the sight lines, and despite the sight lines being inadequate, the property was not in violation of the clear view portions of the City Code.

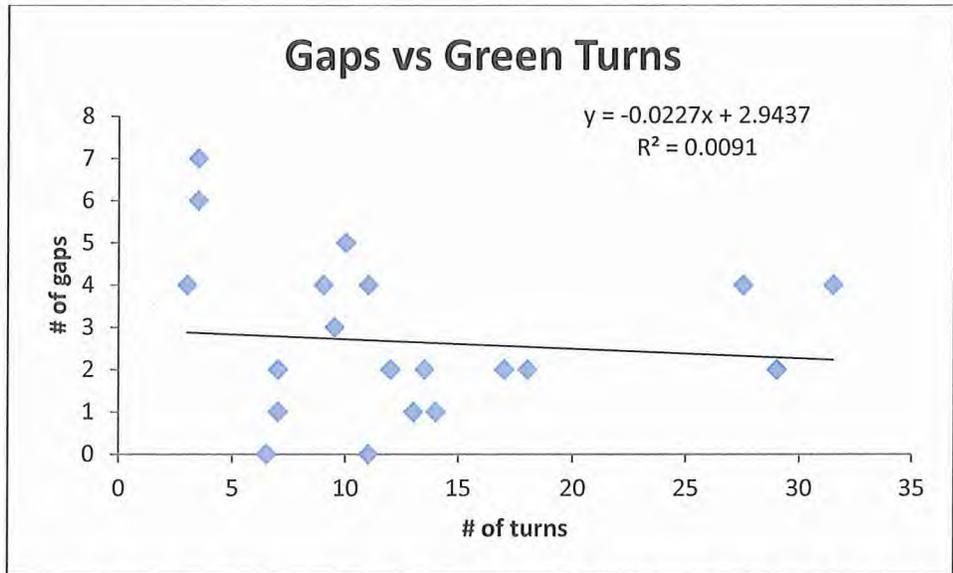
D2 : Requestor was concerned with cut-through traffic on Malibu Drive. During the discussion it was determined that the request was not safety-related. Thus this request was removed by the Traffic Safety Coordinator, and the resident was informed of this decision.

D3 : A potential tenant of the retail development at 77th and Metro Blvd. wished for recent traffic counts in the area, counts from 2013 were available and were provided.

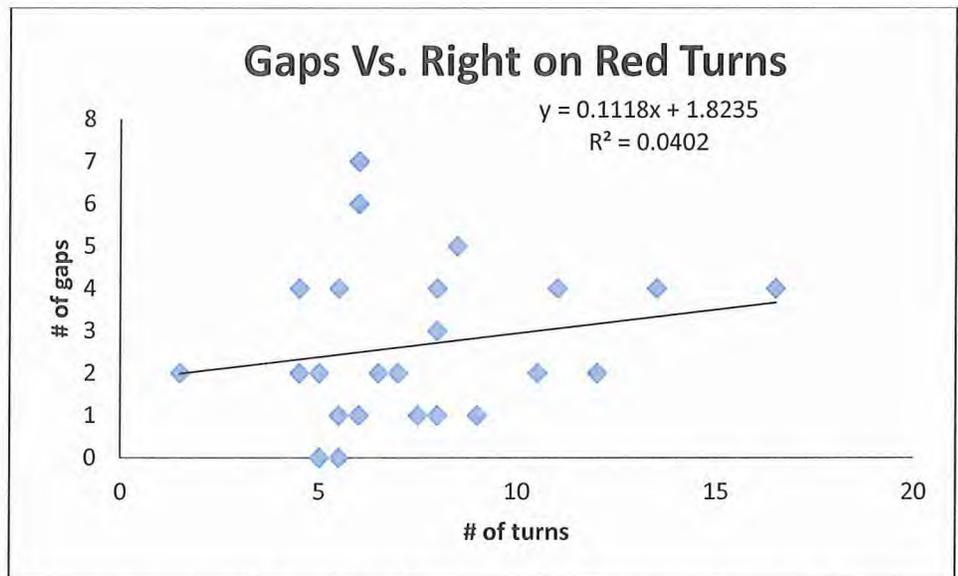
D4 : Requestor believed that 50th and France's signal could be retimed with left turn arrows, despite there not being left turn lanes, to reduce delay in the intersection. This request was forwarded to Minneapolis which controls the signal.

D5 : Requestor has recently noted that actuation of left turn signals along county roads in the Southdale area were not working, this request was forwarded to Hennepin County, which control the signals.

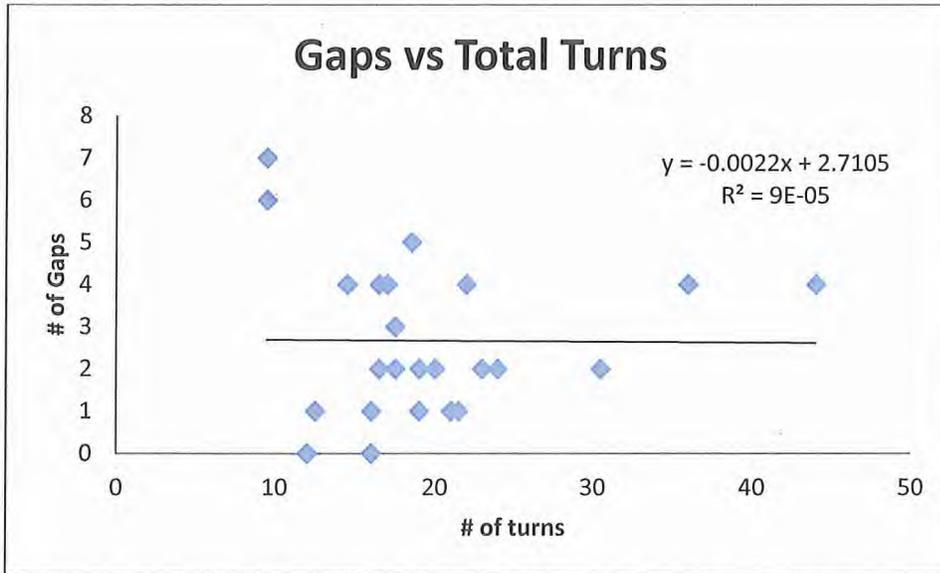
Appendix A: Graphs of the Correlation between Acceptable Gaps for Left Turns and Other Factors



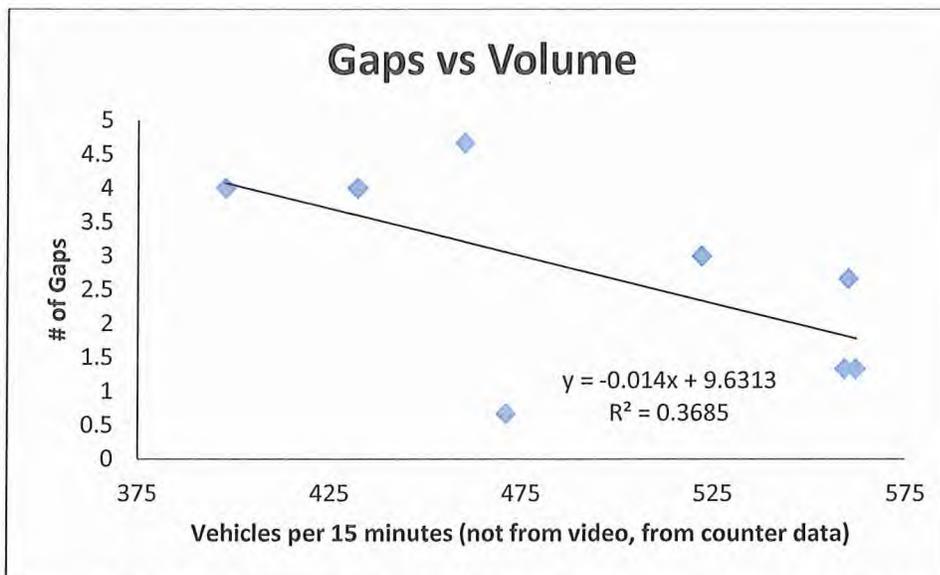
This graph displays the number of acceptable left turn gaps from the driveway (per 5 minute interval) vs the number of people who turn onto 78th Street from Cecilia.



This graph displays the number of acceptable left turn gaps from the driveway (per 5 minute interval) vs the number of turns on red from Cecilia.



This graph displays the number of acceptable left turn gaps from the driveway (per 5 minute interval) vs the number of turns from the driveway.



This graph displays the number of acceptable left turn gaps from the driveway (per 15 minute interval) vs the volume of vehicles carried on 78th street.

Appendix B : Crosswalk Policy

Marked Pedestrian Crosswalks

- A. Marked crosswalks are placed at locations that are unusually hazardous or at locations not readily apparent as having pedestrian movement.
- B. Marked crosswalks will only be placed in an area that has in excess of 20 pedestrians crossing for a minimum of two hours during any eight hour period.
- C. Marking for crosswalks will be established by measuring the "Vehicle Gap Time". This is the total number of gaps between vehicular traffic recorded during the average five minute period in the peak hour. Criteria for markings are:
 - 1) More than five gaps – pavement marking and signage only.
 - 2) Four to five gaps – add activated pedestal mounted flasher.
 - 3) Less than three gaps – add activated overhead mounted flasher.
- D. Crosswalks will not be placed on arterial roads or roads with a speed limit greater than 30 mph unless in conjunction with signalization.
- E. Other conditions that warrant crosswalks:
 - 1) Routes to schools
 - 2) Locations adjacent to libraries, community centers, and other high use public facilities.
 - 3) Locations adjacent to public parks.
 - 4) Locations where significant numbers of handicapped persons cross a street.
 - 5) Locations where significant numbers of senior citizens cross a street.
- F. Crosswalks will only be placed at intersections.