

Design Policy

In February, Ted Focke and Chris Schroedel presented the Design Manual to participants at the Design/Construction conferences in Olympic, South Central, Eastern, and Northwest regions. It was great to meet with many engineers across the the state and discuss the future of the Design Manual with them.

Also in February, the Team is surveying users of the Design Manual to get their input on how to improve it. We're happy to see so many people have taken the time to help us out by giving us their insights.

The Team is wrapping up some chapters for the May 2008 Design Manual revision package, with handoff to Engineering Publications in March. The revisions include:

Chapter 315 Value Engineering. Blane Long and Terry Berends led the development of this rewrite to incorporate SAFETY-LU VE requirements. The new guidance will require VE Studies on any project with total cost over \$25 M and any Bridge Project with cost of \$20M or more.

Chapter 440 Full Design Level. Ted Focke is clarifying guidance on Design Speed, which impacts many other design elements.

Chapter 650 Sight Distance. Ted is also clarifying WSDOT policy on Object Height requirements, when the 6 inch height is required and when 24 inch height may be used with justification.

Chapter 850 (spot fixes to several pages, and incorporate a previous Design Manual Supplement). A larger effort is underway to rewrite this chapter. Rod Erickson and Keith Calias are leading that change with a panel of subject matter experts. When that comes out, some of it may very well end up in the Traffic Manual and some in the Design Manual.

Correcting Intersection Figure 910-16 (Ted Focke)

Updating Figure 1055-17a&b (This figure presents signing requirements for HOV Direct Access connections, with Traffic Office leading the figure revision)

A Design Manual Supplement is currently in review, which will provide guidance for scoping Safety projects programmed for delivery in the '09-'11 biennium. The supplement, drafted by Dick Albin, is now in Jim Klinck's hands as he administers it through review and approval completion. It will include Design Matrices to add to Chapter 325.

Our coordination with other WSDOT manual owners continues. Meeting monthly with the Traffic Office, we are developing plans and priorities with them to update their Traffic Manual, and will be determining guidance that belongs in either the Design or the Traffic manuals, with potential results in late 2008.

We are also continuing efforts with Engineering Publications and other technical manual owners to develop priorities and share lessons learned, with an eye for consistency across manuals and sharing expertise.

Railroads

The HQ Design Office has been given the go-ahead to scope proposed railroad grade crossing improvements at various crossings along the WSDOT system. The Department reviews its crossings periodically to identify benefits from certain equipment and design upgrades. The current proposal involves improving at least 12 crossings through upgrades to railroad signal systems and advance warning mechanisms. For more information, contact Ahmer Nizam at (360) 705-7271.

Utilities

Tom Swafford and Rhonda Wiest at the SW, OR, NW, SC and ER Region Design Construction Conferences. Their message was Best Practices in dealing with Utilities while delivering our projects. Emphasis was on early and often communication with the utility industry. Attendees learned avoidance of utilities should be their first option, and were given an overview of compensable rights and subsurface utility engineering.

Tom Swafford and the Puget Sound Region Utilities Engineers met with Qwest Engineering Managers from across Washington to discuss ways to work cooperatively. This is the third meeting during the past year in an ongoing effort to improve our cooperative effort in accommodating Qwest Telecommunications facilities within State Right of way. Issues discussed were:

Qwest Review of Utilities Manual Revisions

Inconsistent utility permit requirements between the regions
Ideas on how to streamline the expired franchise process
Fiber relocation impacts vs.. copper wire relocation impacts

All parties will meet again in late spring.