



CITY OF SALINAS

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

DATE: May 10, 2018

DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC WORKS

FROM: ANDREW EASTERLING, TRAFFIC ENGINEER
TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

TITLE: CITY STANDARDS FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES UPDATE

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

The Traffic and Transportation Commission is requested to recommend to the City Council the adoption of the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2014 Edition Revision 3 or latest edition as the City standard for traffic control devices.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends to the Traffic and Transportation Commission is requested to recommend to the City Council the approval for adoption of the California Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2014 Edition Revision 3 (CA-MUTCD) or latest edition as the City standard for traffic control devices.

BACKGROUND:

The tremendous importance of clear and consistent messaging when alerting drivers of roadway conditions could not be more obvious. It is important that as drivers move from one city to another or to different regions that messaging from traffic control devices remain clear and unambiguous. Having different standards in signs or other traffic control devices between agencies would be confusing and potential dangerous to drivers who need to be conveyed a clear and simple meaning from a traffic control device. This practical need was recognized as far back as the 1930's when the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO) published the first Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The MUTCD was created in an effort to standardize sign shapes, colors and applications. Over the decades, this manual has evolved and been updated to keep consistent with the times and advancing best practices. In California, the State of Department Transportation (Caltrans) is responsible for keeping standards updated.

In 2005, the Salinas City Council approved the use of the policies and guidelines contained in the California MUTCD 2003 Edition as the local standard for traffic control devices. This action was taken in pursuant to special provisions of the California Vehicle Code (CVC) Section 21400.

“21400. (a) (1) The Department of Transportation shall, after consultation with local agencies and public hearings, adopt rules and regulations prescribing uniform standards and specifications for all official traffic control devices placed pursuant to this code, including, but not limited to, stop signs, yield right-of-way signs, speed restriction signs, railroad warning approach signs, street name signs, lines and markings on the roadway, and stock crossing signs placed pursuant to Section 21364.

(2) The Department of Transportation shall, after notice and public hearing, determine and publicize the specifications for uniform types of warning signs, lights, and devices to be placed upon a highway by a person engaged in performing work that interferes with or endangers the safe movement of traffic upon that highway.

(3) Only those signs, lights, and devices as are provided for in this section shall be placed upon a highway to warn traffic of work that is being performed on the highway.

(4) Control devices or markings installed upon traffic barriers on or after January 1, 1984, shall conform to the uniform standards and specifications required by this section.

(b) The Department of Transportation shall revise the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, as it read on January 1, 2012, to require the Department of Transportation or a local authority to round speed limits to the nearest five miles per hour of the 85th percentile of the free-flowing traffic. However, in cases in which the speed limit needs to be rounded up to the nearest five miles per hour increment of the 85th-percentile speed, the Department of Transportation or a local authority may decide to instead round down the speed limit to the lower five miles per hour increment, but then the Department of Transportation or a local authority shall not reduce the speed limit any further for any reason.”

City staff is proposing an update to the previous Council resolution, and proposes the California MUTCD 2014 Edition Revision 3 or latest edition as the local standard for traffic control devices in the City of Salinas. The previous policy did not provide language to update the MUTCD and many changes occurred since the 2003 edition including sign standards for electronic vehicles, bicycle lane treatments, class IV bikeways, pedestrian facilities, managed lanes, school areas, temporary work zones and other details outlined in the report attachments.

STRATEGIC PLAN INITIATIVE:

The update to the Traffic Control Policy Guidelines supports the Salinas City Council’s Strategic Goal for “well planned city and excellent infrastructure”

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Resolution 20705

Attachment 2: List of MUTCD revisions