

Geometrics and traffic control devices should operate in a manner comparable to the existing operating situation while providing room for the contractor to work effectively. A temporary traffic control plan informs the contractor in writing as to how we expect the traffic to be maintained throughout the project and how the summaries have been worked up. The plan may constitute a traffic maintenance sequence and include drawings and diagrams to convey instructions. Traffic flow arrows are recommended.

It is advantageous to prepare and evaluate the temporary traffic control plans from the motorist's point of view. We have all been delayed in traffic due to road construction. Many times it is unavoidable. Preparing an efficient temporary traffic control plan is one way we can better serve the public. It has been said that the shortest distance between two points is always under construction. This may be the public's perception when they are inconvenienced. Imagine how a driver would view the plan in operation.

Realize that there may be an element of surprise or uncertainty for the driver, who will likely be unfamiliar with the revised traffic pattern and hazards. The temporary traffic control plans must be coordinated with the sequence of construction. Reviewing examples of well prepared maintenance of traffic plans is an excellent way to learn about the various issues to be addressed. The examples should address different construction challenges. Do not hesitate to seek advice from Divisions, sections or individuals with expertise or experience in preparing a temporary traffic control plan, particularly the *responsible District Traffic Engineer.

Maintaining a safe flow of traffic during construction must be carefully planned and executed. Although it is often better to provide detours, frequently it will be necessary to maintain the flow of traffic through the construction area. Construction areas are protected by barriers, appropriate speed limits, channelizing devices, signs, signals, lighting, impact attenuators, truck mounted crash cushions and flagging to provide safe traffic control during construction. Construction area devices may include variable message signs or divided highways. Sometimes it will also be necessary to encroach on the through-traffic lanes or shift lanes entirely in order that the construction can be undertaken. When this is necessary, designs for traffic maintenance should produce as minimal an effect as possible on normal traffic flow. The plan depends on the nature and scope of the improvement, volumes of traffic, highway or street pattern, and capacities of available highways or streets. The plan should have some built-in flexibility to accommodate unforeseen changes in work schedule, delays, or traffic patterns.

Adequate advance warning and sufficient follow-up information are needed for the motorist. Standards for the use and application of signs and other traffic control devices when highway construction occurs are set forth in Part VI of the Federal Highway Administration's [Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#), MUTCD. Designs for the use and application of signs and other traffic control devices are developed by the Traffic Engineering Division of VDOT. Traffic control devices instructions published by the Traffic Engineering Division are included in [The Virginia Supplement to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#).

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