

**LYON COUNTY SECONDARY ROAD DEPARTMENT**  
**POLICY AND PROCEDURE MEMORANDUM**

PPM Origination Date: December 2016

Revision Date:

SUBJECT: Lyon County Policy for Supplemental Signs and Traffic Control Devices

I. DEFINITIONS:

Traveled Way: Designated driving surface of a road (including the shoulder).

Roadside: Areas within ROW that are outside the Traveled Way.

Clear Zone: A distance measured from the outside edge of the shoulder away from the road (min. 10’).

Right-of-Way (ROW): Property obtained through deed or permanent easement reserved for construction of and/or maintenance of transportation facilities (typically 66’ wide on most county roads).

Sponsor: Resident, business, or group financially responsible for the sign installation and continued maintenance.

II. BACKGROUND:

This policy pertains to the use of supplemental signs and traffic control devices on roads under the jurisdiction of the Lyon County Secondary Road Department. The supplemental signs and traffic control devices policy for Lyon County is to conform to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and Applicable Iowa Department of Transportation Publications. This policy also provides guidance applicable to Lyon County Secondary Roads for unusual or non-standard requests and outlines the basis for the engineer’s determination of whether and how such items may be placed in the County Road ROW as well as cost responsibility. Examples of non-standard sign requests include: “Children at Play”, “Farm Machinery”, “Trucks entering Highway”,

and “School” related signs. Other groups such as parks departments, public agencies, non-profit organizations and members of the public also have been known to request signs and markers of various types.

### III. PURPOSE:

To provide a uniform policy and procedure for the application of criteria used to assist in determining whether supplemental signs and traffic control devices should be used throughout the Secondary Road System in Lyon County. This policy serves as a supplement to referenced manuals for signs or devices not currently discussed or defined.

### IV. REFERENCES:

Code of Iowa, Section 321.252, 321.255; Iowa Administrative Rules 761-119; Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices; Iowa DOT Traffic and Safety Manual.

### V. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

#### Sign Facing:

The County will use only high intensity or higher grade prismatic sheeting for all traffic signs on county highways. This shall not preclude the County Engineer from utilizing current stock of engineer grade signs that were purchased or installed prior to the adoption of this policy until their usefulness is exhausted. The County Engineer, in her professional judgment, will determine locations where higher grade sheeting is required for additional warning or visibility.

#### Street Signs:

Street signs shall conform to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Existing signs not in compliance with the current MUTCD standards will be replaced with compliant signs at the end of the current sign’s useful life.

#### Retroreflectivity and nighttime visibility:

Lyon County will comply with standards for maintaining nighttime sign visibility as required in section 2A.08 of the MUTCD by a program of nighttime visual inspection of county road signs. The retroreflectivity of existing signs will be assessed by a trained

sign inspector conducting a visual inspection from a moving vehicle during nighttime conditions. Complete system inspection will be done in compliance with MUTCD recommendations on a bi-annual basis beginning in 2016. Signs that are visually identified by the inspector to have retroreflectivity below the minimum levels will be replaced as soon as budget and staff time allow after being identified by the inspection.

Secondary Road employees will also be encourage to note and turn in reports of damaged signs or signs screened by vegetation as part of their normal duties while performing work on county roads to supplement this inspection program.

Sign Repair and Replacement:

Damaged signs will be repaired or replaced based on the following guidelines:

Stop and Yield Signs: Stop and yield signs will be repaired on a 24 hour per day, 7 day per week basis. Upon receiving a report of the loss or damage to a stop or yield sign from emergency responders, county emergency dispatchers, secondary road department staff or other reports, county secondary road staff will respond as soon as an employee can be called in to work and travel to the location with a replacement sign. Emergency replacement will normally be accomplished by installing a temporary sign on a support, stand or barricade until a permanent replacement can be installed to replace the damaged sign. If time, conditions at the site, and equipment allow, the damaged sign may be replaced on a permanent post immediately at the discretion of the employee or his immediate supervisor. If not placed on a permanent support as part of the emergency repair, the sign will be permanently replaced after a utility locate is performed, usually within two business days.

Warning and other regulatory signs: Warning and other regulatory signs will be repaired the next business day after being reported to the road department if the sign can be replaced within its existing mounting or post hole. Signs which cannot be replaced in their existing mounting or posthole will be replaced as soon as utility locates can be completed.

Rural intersection signs: Rural intersection signs will be replaced as soon as new signs are available during the sign technician's normal working day. Since rural intersection signs are not always kept in stock, a period of days or weeks may pass before replacement signs can be ordered and manufactured.

## VI. RESIDENT or BUSINESS REQUESTED SIGNING:

The resident, business, or group making the request for the sign shall pay upfront the cost of the sign, post, county equipment and labor to decide placement and installation of the sign unless noted below. The county will install the sign at its earliest convenience. The county will provide the labor and materials necessary to place the sign. In the event of damage caused by accident or vandalism, or degradation of the sign face due to age or the environment, the Engineer shall notify the group sponsoring the sign of the need for replacement. The group will be required to pay the cost for the new sign and all other costs associated with the replacement. If the group does not maintain the sign as recommended by the Engineer, the sign will be removed at no cost to the sponsor, and without compensation, to the sponsor. Property owners may not install signs on county rights of way. County crews will do all sign installations. Signs installed by others will be removed without notification.

### School Signs

School signs include school bus stop ahead signs, school speed limits signs, school advance signs, and school crossing ahead signs. School signs are not necessary at all locations and will only be erected based on a request by appropriate school officials followed by an engineering study of the location in question. The MUTCD does not require installation of any school sign. Any school signs erected will be placed according to the standards of the MUTCD. Signs of these types are placed at the request of the schools under the terms of this policy, and the schools will reimburse the Department for all work performed.

The school bus stop ahead sign is designed as a warning of conditions that are not present throughout the day or the year. Signs that warn of occasional hazards tend to reduce the respect of drivers for other warning signs. It is for this reason that installations of this sign will be limited. The sign is to be placed only where terrain and roadway features limit sight distance and the stop cannot be relocated to another location with adequate sight distance. This sign may be placed at a location at the request of the school district. Any requests for the placement of these signs must come through the school bus superintendent or the superintendent of the school district. The Department will direct requests from parents or other county residents to the appropriate school district officials.

Upon receipt of a request from the school superintendent or the superintendent of schools for a school bus stop ahead or a school bus turnaround sign, the County Engineer will review the location for the adequacy of available sight distance according to the MUTCD. The determination of adequate sight distance will be based on whether a school bus stopped at location is not visible to road users for a distance of 500 feet in advance. If

the location has less than the required sight distance, the county will install a sign at the appropriate distance ahead of the school bus stop or turnaround. The school district will pay for the sign and the county will provide the post, labor and equipment to erect the sign at no cost to the school. Signs no longer needed will be removed upon request of the school district. The school district will be reminded periodically to review the need for these signs.

If the location has required sight distance, the Engineer will recommend to the school official making the request that a sign is not warranted. If the school decides that a sign be placed at the location anyway, the school will be responsible for all cost associated with the installation, including sign, post, labor and equipment costs.

School crossing and speed limit signs will be reviewed by the department based on an engineering study. Wherever feasible, the school district will route pedestrian, school bus, and automobile traffic entering the school grounds to use existing traffic control in the area.

#### Playground Area, Children at Play and Related Signs

Children at play, playground area, horses on the highway, and other similar warning signs requested by county residents will be installed by the county upon request. With the exception of the playground area sign (W15-1), these signs are not recognized by the MUTCD and are not considered traffic control devices. As such, the Department will not maintain these signs, nor is installation recommended. An engineering study will not be performed prior to placement and the Department will express no opinion, nor accept liability for their placement. Persons requesting these signs will sign a release on liability prior to installation.

Signs will be placed at the appropriate advance distance ahead of the area to be protected according to advance warning sign placement distances in the MUTCD for the posted speed limit. Signs shall be black on yellow in the same style as official warning signs.

#### Farm Machinery and Trucks Entering Highway

Farm machinery, truck entering highway, and other similar warning signs requested by county residents will be installed by the county upon request. Signs will be placed at the appropriate distance ahead of the area to be protected according to advance warning sign placement distances in the MUTCD for the posted speed limit. Signs will be black on yellow warning signs and shall meet minimum size requirements as recommended by the MUTCD.

If the resident requests, an advisory speed plate may be installed with the warning sign. The appropriate advisory speed will be established based on a survey of the location and a determination of stopping sight distance by the County Engineer.

#### Historic Markers and Park Signs

Historic markers and park signs will be installed by the county upon request by cities, historic societies, the county conservation department, or other recognized groups to direct travelers to roadside parks and monuments. Signs will be placed at the appropriate distance ahead of the area to be protected according to advance warning sign placement distances in the MUTCD for the posted speed limit signs will be white on brown and shall meet minimum size requirements as recommended by the MUTCD.

#### Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS)

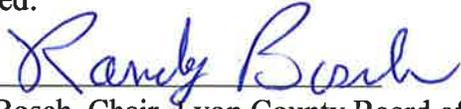
Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) are signs that identify activities or sites of significant interest to the traveling public. The message on a tourist-oriented directional sign is limited to a descriptive name, a directional arrow, and travel distance to the activity or site. Signs will be placed at the appropriate distance ahead of the area to be protected according to advance warning sign placement distances in the MUTCD for the posted speed limit. Signs will be blue on white directional signs and shall meet minimum size requirements as recommended by the MUTCD.

#### Cost:

Once the Engineer or the Board of Supervisors has approved the need and the proposed sign placement, the cost will be \$500 before the sign will be ordered. This will cover the costs of the sign, post, county equipment and labor to decide placement and installation of the sign. Additionally, this will cover the County's cost to add it into the sign program. If it is determined by the Engineer that the sign needs to be replaced, the sponsor will need to pay the County \$350 for a replacement sign. The County is not liable for the sign, the sponsor is. At no time will the County pay for a new sign or a replacement sign.

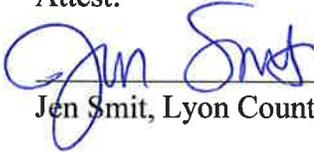
Submitted and acceptance this 12 day of September 2016.

Approved:



Randy Bosch, Chair, Lyon County Board of Supervisors

Attest:



Jen Smit, Lyon County Auditor