



# TRAFFIC AND SAFETY MANUAL

## Chapter 1 – Introduction 1A – General

### About This Manual

Originally Issued: 12-17-01, Last Revised: 01-27-04

This *Traffic and Safety Manual* is published by the Office of Traffic and Safety. Unlike many other documents published by the Iowa Department of Transportation (Iowa DOT), this manual is only available online. It may be viewed from the Office of Traffic and Safety web page. One of the major benefits of this document is that it provides links to additional resources or supporting documentation. These links are indicated by underlined blue text and may be clicked to link to the resource. Every attempt will be made to keep these links current, but since we recognize that changes may occur with or without our knowledge we ask that you forward any errors/omissions to us for correction.

This document will be expanded as needed and modified to incorporate changes in Iowa DOT policy and changes in Traffic and Safety guidelines, methodologies, and practices. It is our intention to improve or revise the contents of this document based on input from users of the manual. Future updates to the manual will include additional topics addressed by the Office of Traffic and Safety as well as revisions to the current content. Affected offices will be consulted as a part of the revision process.

Most sections in the *Traffic and Safety Manual* are intended to provide guidelines or information on how a certain activity related to traffic engineering and safety issues are handled. To a lesser extent, the manual is also used to document normal and/or best practices.

Some material in the *Traffic and Safety Manual* replaces documents previously published in print form, rendering those printed documents obsolete.

The *Traffic and Safety Manual* is meant to be a resource, not a cookbook or document that restricts innovation. The judgment of the engineer in consultation with staff of the Office of Traffic and Safety may supersede the guidelines in this manual. However, if deviation is made from normal practices outlined in this manual, documentation clearly explaining the situation and reasons should be prepared and kept on file.

### Effective Dates

There will be no specific effective date indicated for material published in this manual. Instead, the date the section was originally issued will be indicated (see above) and if the page is revised, the latest revision date will also be listed (see below). The document revision history will be listed at the end of each document.

Affected offices will be notified when significant changes are made to guidelines for activities, processes or projects.

Activities, processes, or projects covered by the *Traffic and Safety Manual* should follow the guidelines set forth in the manual. If new guidelines are issued for an activity, process, or project that is under development or has been started then a determination should be made if the new or old guidelines will be followed. If it is possible, the new guidelines should be followed. If it is decided that the new guidelines will not be followed then an explanation justifying this action should be prepared and put on file.

In some cases there will be a fixed date when a new practice must be implemented (for example, a specific deadline set by FHWA for providing crashworthy devices). The Office of Traffic and Safety will attempt to notify affected offices/districts of these deadlines but these dates will not be listed in the manual.

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