

Virginia Statewide Directional Signing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2017

Meeting time: 9:30 a.m.

Virginia Tourism Commission, One James Center
901 East Cary Street, Richmond VA 23219

1. Introductions

Rick Burgess served as Chair in place of Ray Khoury. Rick opened the meeting while a sign-in sheet was distributed to the attendees.

Committee Members Present:

Val Guffy Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)

Committee Members Not In Attendance:

Michael O'Connor Virginia Petroleum, Convenience, and Growers Association (VPCGA)
Karen King Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Ray Khoury VDOT Traffic Engineering Division
Martha Mitchell Meade American Automobile Association (AAA)
Roger Cole National Association of Truck Stop Operators (NATSO)
Katie Frazier Virginia Agribusiness Council
Kristan Havard Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association (VHTA)
Dale Bennett Virginia Trucking Association (VTA)
Leighton Powell Scenic Virginia

VDOT Support Staff:

Rick Burgess VDOT – Traffic Engineering Division
Al Bryan VDOT – Traffic Engineering Division
Lewis Bridgforth III VDOT – Traffic Engineering Division

Virginia Logos Staff:

Bill Jones Virginia Logos – Regional Manager
Jason Newcomb Virginia Logos – General Manager
Todd Pitcher Virginia Logos
Barrie B. Bowers FutureLaw, L.L.C.

Guest:

Marie Henderson Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC)
Alley Harned Virginia Clean Cities

2. Previous Meeting Minutes: November 9, 2016

Copies of the previous meeting's minutes were distributed for review and discussion. The minutes were accepted as written.

3. IDSP

a. Status of Participation (Virginia Logos)

Jason Newcomb of Virginia Logos distributed and updated his report dated May 24th,

2017. Moderate growth was noted in the LOGO Attractions program. The current total is 11,906, up from 11,876 in November of 2016, including Mainlines, Ramps and Trailblazers. A PFD of Virginia Logos report is attached.

b. Presentation on Alternative Fuel Corridor Signing (Marc Lipschultz)

Marc Lipschultz of VDOT TED cited an FHWA memo with regard to potential signs that could be erected on “Signage Ready Corridors” by States who wish to participate where EV charging stations are available every 50 miles. Currently there are no plans, directive or funding from the FHWA to install Alternative Corridor Fuel Signing, which would be informational signs located on independent structures. However, current Logo participants could have up to two supplementary messages per logo indicating alternative fuel services located at their business.

With regard to criteria, the MUTCD currently shows a three-mile limit for the distance of alternative fuel stations from the interstate. There are few corridors currently eligible for signing and the FHWA will only make subsequent reviews of “Alternative Pending” corridors to see if they would qualify as “Signage Ready” every five years.

Additional thoughts on the subject included the following points:

- Develop criteria for LPG and CNG signing
- It was noted that these fuels are primarily “fleet oriented” and do not necessarily apply to the traveling public.
- LPG and CNG requires certification to dispense fuel.
- There are other means of informing the public about alternative fuel locations other than additional signing.
- Current “signage-ready” corridors include portions of I-95, I-81, I-66, I-64, and I-85. FHWA will revisit this list by 2020 and many “signage-pending” corridors could “graduate” to signage-ready status at that time.
- While a road is considered signage-ready for EV vehicles with EV stations spaced every 50 miles, other alternative fuels are considered signage-ready with stations every 150 or 200 miles. At such a large distance the corridor designation means little. For example, all of I-95 could be considered signage-ready for CNG with just 1~2 refueling locations in the entire state.
- If VDOT were to erect Alternative Fuel Corridor signs, it may make sense to solely sign for electric vehicles and not CNG or LPG. VDOT would want to avoid signing more than 2-3 fuel types on the same corridor to minimize driver distraction.
- A concern with GMSS or logo signs for CNG and LPG refueling locations is drivers may have a built-in expectation of being able to also purchase traditional gas at that location.
- Alternative Fuel Corridor signs would cost approximately \$2700 (including sign, posts, foundations, and installation costs).

c. Presentation on Alternative Fuel Criteria as defined by other states (Lewis Bridgforth III)

Lewis Bridgforth of VDOT IDSP presented information gleaned from other states based upon an e-mail sent from Ray Khoury, State Traffic Engineer, asking “*How do you sign for these*”

types of facilities under Logo and GSS, please share any criteria/policies you may have.”

Of the states that responded, twelve had alternative fuel criteria developed for their respective Logo programs. Two of these states also had criteria for TODS signs and seven had criteria for GSS (GMSS) signs. Six states have begun to sign for Electric Vehicle EV.

A brief review of existing charging stations was made, as well as the current three levels of chargers (EV1, EV2 and EV3). EV3 generally takes 30 minutes for a full charge. EV2 takes several hours and EV1 up to twelve hours for a full charge.

Charging stations also have different ways to pay including, pay-as-you-go, monthly subscriptions and free charging currently offered by Tesla and certain promotional charging stations, such as those located at dealerships. Monthly subscriptions may be purchased from “charging networks” such as ChargePoint and EVgo in the eastern US. The number of charging stations available in Virginia has increased 18% in the last six months resulting, potentially, in a 40% increase by the end of 2017.

Specific alternative fuel signing criteria was reviewed from the states of Delaware, Minnesota, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and North Carolina. A PDF of the full presentation on Alternative Fuel Criteria from other states is attached.

4. Open Discussion

Discussion continued on the potential signing for EV and associated criteria that would need to be established. The following points were suggested to start with and Virginia Logos will DRAFT criteria for VDOT review.

- 3 Charging stations minimum required for signing
- Only EV3 charging stations permissible
- Logo signing as a “Category 2” only
- Two EV Logos maximum per interchange direction or GMSS sign for Alt. Fuel.

5. Next Meeting Agenda Topics:

VDOT will need more information from the FHWA as to their expectations with regard to designated “EV Corridors” as well as other alternative fuel corridors.

VDOT will review and discuss criteria for signing EV charging stations.

6. Next Meeting:

The upcoming fall meeting date is Wednesday, November 8, 2017.

7. Adjourn