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Michiganite

| Official Publication of the Michigan Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers |

# Letter from the President

**Scott Shogan**
**ITE Michigan Section President**

Frequently, in all facets of our professional lives, we hear of the benefits of partnerships. Building partnerships is a complex process, and requires uniting various groups, often with different agendas, around a common goal or outcome. As we look around the transportation industry in our own backyard, most projects today could not have been achieved without building partnerships on some level.

As important as partnerships are in what we do every day, my involvement in planning transportation management for Super Bowl XL in Detroit this last winter impressed upon me the value of an even more powerful concept: personal ownership. In our industry, partnerships are often borne of agencies or groups sharing common goals, and agreeing to work together to reach them. But the real strength of partnerships is found when the individuals charged with reaching those goals have personal ownership in the outcome.

Nowhere was this principle more evident than on the streets of downtown Detroit during Super Bowl weekend. The non-stop parties (and non-stop people) brought a transportation crush perhaps never before seen in the city's history. Street closures were in effect throughout much of downtown for street festivals and security, the extent of which changed almost hourly. The city bus system, DDOT, operated a massive park-and-ride service to downtown, all while maintaining their normal weekend operations. And the world was watching on gameday, with relentless media accounts showing visions of 1982, with Super Bowl patrons abandoning their cars along the side of I-75 in a snowstorm so they could make it to Silverdome for the game.

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Deadline for
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***January 31, 2006***

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## Michigan Section 2006 ITE Meeting Schedule

| *Date* | *Location* | *Type* | *Host* |
|---|---|---|---|
| December 7, 2006 | Farmington Hills | Annual Mtg. / Tech. Session | Kevin McCarthy |

## JOB POSTINGS

**There are no postings at this time.**

Are you looking for a qualified candidate to fill a position at your organization? Advertise in the Michigan*ITE* and reach hundreds of Michigan Engineers! For rate information, or to begin your search for highly qualified Michigan candidates, contact Kimberly McDaniel at (248) 844-5400 or kmcdaniel@spaldingdedecker.com.

## Is this sign in "Clear View" font?

# Letter from the President

(Cont'd from Page 2)

If not for partnerships amongst event organizers and the vast number of agencies involved, planning for this event could never have happened. But if not for the personal ownership of all of those individuals involved in executing the plan, Detroit could never have shined like it did. The needs were enormous. Continual changes to street closures. A severely overtaxed park-and-ride system. Thousands of pedestrians flooding the streets. For one weekend, everyone from agency directors to bus drivers and sign shop workers had a tangible, important role, and had a personal ownership in carrying out that role to the best of their ability. No task was beneath anyone. Among the countless examples of this ownership in action: the director of DDOT helping police direct a crush of traffic to keep buses moving; officials from the Mayor's office and MDOT engineers standing in the freezing rain helping pedestrians find their way; a traffic control contractor sleeping in his truck so that he could make early-morning adjustments; 4:00am debriefs followed by 8:00am strategy meetings at the temporary joint operations center at MITSC; and bus drivers volunteering for last minute shift extensions to keep the steady flow of riders moving. Some of these people were paid for their time. Many of them were not. But one thing was for certain: none of what went on that weekend fit into anyone's official job description. One example that will always stick with me: helping a DPW worker delivering crowd control barricades to help manage the downtown transit hub. We were both exhausted and freezing, and trying to manage what was rapidly becoming an unmanageable crowd. She looked at me with a giant smile on her face, and said "isn't this incredible to see the Detroit look this good, and with all of this energy?" That's personal ownership.

While an event the magnitude of the Super Bowl is an extreme example of personal ownership in action, it was a great reminder to me of what a long way that concept can go. I think this also has an important extension to our ITE section. The Executive Board and the countless volunteers do all we can to keep the Michigan Section moving, and to keep it relevant to our members. But at the end of the day, this is your organization, and I encourage you all to take a personal ownership in what this section is, and what it could become. Volunteer. Write a newsletter article or speak at a session. Offer up new ideas (or old ones). Bring industry issues to our attention. You don't have to dedicate a lot of your time. I'm proud of the Michigan Section and where we are today, but I'm also a firm believer that we could go much further if we all take a personal ownership in what we become tomorrow.

# Institute of Transportation Engineers
# 2007 Wilbur S. Smith Distinguished Transportation Educator Award

In Cooperation With:
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials• Eno Transportation Foundation
Federal Highway Administration • Highway Traffic Bureau Alumni Association • Highway Users Federation for Safety and Mobility
Transportation Research Board • International Road Foundation

*The Wilbur S. Smith Award is given annually to a transportation educator who has made an outstanding contribution to the Transportation profession by relating academic studies to the actual practice of transportation. The Award recognizes transportation educators who help their students to advance their professional development, enhance their opportunities to come into contact with practicing transportation professionals and to become active participants in the profession.*

**All award nominations are due by November 1, 2006 for the 2007 Award.**

Award winners will receive recognition at the ITE Annual Meeting and Exhibit and in the ITE Journal and a plaque of recognition.

Eligibility Criteria:
- Be employed or have been employed by a higher education institution to teach undergraduate and/or graduate courses in transportation.
- Have provided students with the opportunity to relate their course work in transportation to the actual practice of transportation. Such opportunities may include but not limited to visits to agencies and firms, guest lectures by practicing professionals, exposure to current transportation policy issues and programs, encouraging part time and/or summer employment in transportation and participating in community service projects to address current transportation issues.
- Have provided students with knowledge, skills and values that will help them to anticipate needs to harness innovative, cost effective technologies to solve problems as future transportation professionals.

Nomination:
- A letter must be submitted identifying the candidate (name, title, position, address, name of university/college) and addressing the above Eligibility Criteria.
- Additional material may be included with the nomination letter, but to be considered the packet must at least contain a nomination letter.
- All materials must be submitted in a format that can be easily reproduced, no spiral bound packets please.
- All applications must be submitted no later than November 1, 2006.

Submittal:
Send the nomination packet by November 1, 2006 to:
Heather Talbert, Outreach Associate
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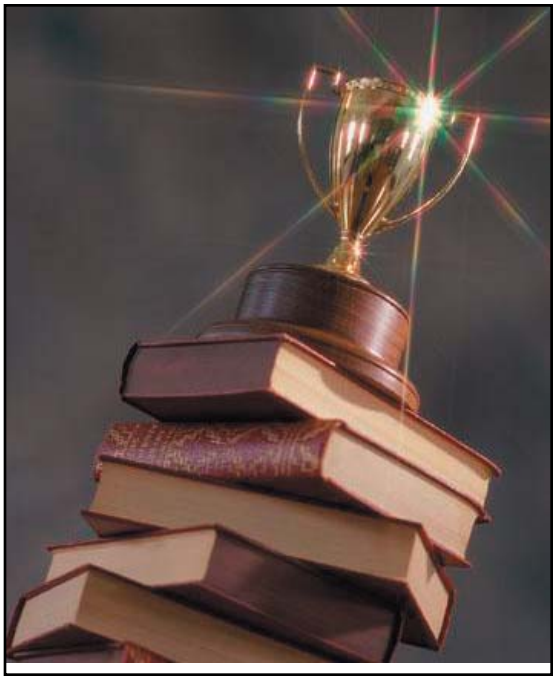
1099 14th Street, NW, Suite 300 West
Washington, DC 20005-3438
Any questions, contact Heather at ITE
202-289-0222 ext. 138 or htalbert@ite.org.



# Clearance Intervals
# ITE Guidelines Prove To Be Effective

By: John K. Abraham, PE, PhD

There has always been a debate on whether the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) recommended guidelines for clearance intervals or change intervals should be used to time traffic signals. For many years in Michigan this has been a topic of discussion and debate between road agencies while red light violation and related traffic crashes continue to be a concern. This is because a good portion of crashes that occur at urban signalized intersections involve the running of red lights and often result in severe injuries.

In late 2002 and 2003 the City of Troy engineers calculated clearance/change intervals (yellow + all-red) for all signalized intersections using the ITE guidelines. The Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) maintains all traffic signals within the City, and as partners in this effort, implemented in 2003 and early 2004. The revised clearance intervals were based on ITE guidelines that now included the recommended yellow and all-red times. A study was performed to analyze before and after traffic crash experience. The study included the top 20 high-crash locations in the City. One year's worth of "before" data and one year worth of "after" data on traffic crashes were compared. A review of the comparison reveals that at a majority of intersections there have been reductions in traffic crashes. This paper will discuss the findings of this evaluation of clearance intervals.

## INTRODUCTION

Clearance Interval or the Change Interval (CI) is that phase of a traffic signal cycle used to alert motorists about an imminent change in right of way assignment to a conflicting direction of traffic flow. The CI normally is characterized by a yellow indication followed by an all-red clearance indication. The purposes of the CI are to advise the motorist that a red signal is about to commence, permit motorists to come to a safe stop and to provide vehicles in the intersection enough time to clear before opposing vehicles get their green. The length of the yellow interval and the all-red interval has been a topic of strong debate amongst the traffic engineering community. While some believe strongly that a uniform change interval is the best, others believe strongly that the uniform change intervals are not safe. Road agencies in the State of Michigan have for the past many decades used uniform change intervals for traffic signals, with a uniform yellow interval and an optional all-red clearance interval of up to 1 second. In our annual evaluation of high traffic crash locations, engineers at the city of Troy noticed certain patterns of traffic crashes that were coded as "disregard traffic control" or "unable to stop in assured clear distance" by police officers in the traffic crash reports. The percentage of such crashes that may be attributed to running red lights was around 9%; they also represented around 35% of all severe injury crashes at intersections. Further, statistics from the State showed that Michigan experienced approximately 9,500 crashes per year that were red light related, with 44% of these crashes involving injuries and fatalities. As a nation it is estimated that there are around 218,000 crashes, 181,000 injuries and around 880 fatalities due to crashes as a result of traffic signal violations. These statistics prompted us to look closely at traffic signal timing and ways to enhance traffic safety.

In 2000 we performed a review of the state-of-the-art related to traffic signal timing. A majority of the studies published by the ITE and the Transportation Research Board (TRB) tended to support the belief that uniform CI may not be the safest design. There were also couple of studies that concluded that adding an all-red interval increased the number of violations. In an informal survey of practices from many states, almost all states contacted used an all-red interval as a safety measure, and many states used the ITE recommended

## Clearance Intervals By John K. Abraham, PE, PhD Cont'd

guideline for their clearance intervals. Although many state road agencies did not have scientific studies on the effect of a well-designed yellow+all-red phase, most states quoted anecdotal safety benefits. Several research studies such as the study by Retting et.al, and experimental studies performed at the Wayne State University by Datta et.al, convinced us to upgrade the CIs using the ITE recommended formula. One other factor that influenced this decision is a simple analysis of the options a motorist has when faced with a yellow signal. The first situation is when a motorist is at a speed where a complete stop can be made before entering the intersection. This situation is the safest. The second situation is when the motorist is at such a speed that he/she cannot stop in a safe manner upstream of the stop bar, however may be able to clear the intersection at the same speed or by accelerating. The third situation is the least safe, where a motorist can neither stop in a safe and comfortable manner, nor clear the intersection before the conflicting movement begins. Most major intersection crashes involve motorists faced with the third situation. This third situation is also called the "dilemma zone" in literature. One way of helping out these motorists in a dilemma zone is to add a all-red phase to the intersection such that this interval provides time long enough for the motorist to clear the intersection before the conflicting direction gets its green.

### PROJECT EVALUATION

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the short term and long term value of this low cost safety improvement. The short-term evaluation is a comparison of traffic crashes at the top 20 high-crash locations within the City for a one year "before" and one year "after" implementation of the upgraded clearance intervals. The long-term evaluation is proposed when we have enough data to perform a 2 year "before" and 2 year "after" period. At that time we could also analyze the trends in traffic crashes over 2 years after implementation.

### CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study indicate that clearance intervals (yellow plus all-red intervals) calculated according to the ITE formula proved to be effective in reducing traffic crashes at City of Troy's top 20 high crash signalized intersections. The implementation of ITE recommended clearance intervals also reduced a significantly higher percentage of traffic crashes involving drivers 65 and above of age, when compared to other age groups of drivers. This low-cost improvement yields a very high benefit to cost ratio as assessed by this evaluation study.

The complete text of this study was originally published at the 2006 ITE Technical Conference. For more information, including a list of references, contact:

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# Traffic Signal Retiming Strategy for the State of Michigan

Marc Start P.E. PTOE, Gregory Krueger P.E., Matthew Smith P.E. PTOE

The State of Michigan USA, like many states, is experiencing an acute lack of funding for highcost capacity improvements and road reconstruction. As a result, traffic operations improvements such as traffic signal retiming have grown in their importance as a means of maximizing the capacity of the existing roadway infrastructure.
To this end, several stakeholders in the metropolitan Detroit area and the Michigan Department of Transportation joined together in 2002 to form the Traffic Signal Strategy and Vision committee, a subcommittee of the Traffic Signal Summit, to look ahead to what the future may hold for traffic signal operations. The first task was to develop a traffic signal retiming strategy that identified goals, methods, prioritization of traffic signal corridors, funding, and project administration for a renewable traffic signal optimization program. The local metropolitan planning organization (SEMCOG), which includes 7 counties, was involved to work through funding issues and to tailor the program to the 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The traffic signal retiming strategy was approved in June 2004 by the Traffic Signal Summit committee.

The significant issues that faced the committee were insufficient public agency staff to perform or administer the traffic signal retiming, project administration options (centralized management or decentralized management), and developing guidelines for the retiming of traffic signal corridors with varying characteristics. The effort in southeast Michigan has spawned interest to consider traffic signal retiming across the entire state, especially with the Michigan Department of Transportation.

The Traffic Signal Summit program began in 1999 as a means of coordinating traffic signal issues in the southeast portion of Michigan, including the Detroit metropolitan area. Due to the traffic congestion experienced in the region, one outgrowth of the Traffic Signal Summit is an emphasis on retiming traffic signals on an ongoing basis.

Improving traffic flow and safety through traffic signal retiming is one of the most cost-effective uses of funds to enhance mobility. Traffic signal retiming projects typically yield benefit/cost ratios in the range of 15:1 to 25:1. Subsequent retiming efforts of the same corridor usually yield a lower benefit/cost ratio. Since over 44% of all crashes in urban areas occur at intersections, measures such as traffic signal retiming are some of the lowest cost improvements available that can have a significant effect.

Traffic signal retiming should be viewed as a maintenance activity that prolongs the effectiveness of the existing roadway infrastructure. Without a periodic update of the traffic signal timing, the existing roadway capacity may not be used to its fullest extent and air quality impacts are not minimized. When funds for road and bridge construction are limited, the traffic signal retiming becomes more attractive since it is relatively inexpensive on a per unit cost basis, provides a high return on investment, and can be implemented quickly. The preliminary results of the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

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## TRAFFIC SIGNAL RETIMING STRATEGY FOR THE STATE OF MICHIGAN Cont'd

(SEMCOG) 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) development process indicate a significant monetary shortfall for mitigating roadway capacity deficiencies, which will require maximizing the capacity potential of the existing roadway system to meet the transportation needs of southeast Michigan. A few of the many benefits of an ongoing traffic signal retiming program are as follows:

· Enhances safety through periodic evaluation of the traffic signal timing and phasing
· Enhances mobility and efficiency
· Reduces air pollution, fuel consumption, and travel time
· Reduces driver frustration
· Identifies the need for roadway improvements when traffic signal retiming alone cannot mitigate congestion

In a time where budgets are continually being tightened, traffic signal retiming provides a high "return on investment" to the public, enhances intersection safety, and reduces the impact on the environment. It maximizes the traffic capacity and flow potential of the existing roadway system. The traffic signal retiming strategy process described in this document represents one way that the traveling motorist may be better served. Currently, a limited amount of traffic signal retiming takes place on a regular basis in Michigan. This is a result of limited public agency staff dedicated to traffic signal retiming and a lack of renewable funding sources. Limited public agency staff resources have been identified as the most significant challenge to the implementation of an ongoing traffic signal retiming program. Public agencies have traditionally focused on roadway and bridge construction and maintenance as a means of preserving roadway capacity, rather than taking an operations-oriented approach to enhancing the existing roadway capacity.

Determining where traffic signal retiming is most needed is a matter of priority. Traffic signal retiming on a subregional basis is one method of determining priorities and a review should occur every 3-8 years. Some traffic signal corridors will need to be reviewed more frequently due to their importance to regional mobility, a high rate of development, or other contributing factors. A traffic signal corridor utilizing any method of operations control will benefit from a traffic signal retiming program.

An ongoing traffic signal retiming program in which all transportation agencies participate using an ongoing funding source is the most effective way to fund traffic signal retiming projects. Such a program provides the best opportunity to leverage any available federal funds.

This paper appeared in its complete form as part of the 2006 ITE Technical Conference. For more information, or to read the complete text, contact:

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TO: ALL COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONS AND COMMISSIONERS
FROM: ED NOYOLA
DATE: JULY 21, 2006
SUBJ: LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE APPROVES FY 2007 OMNIBUS BUDGET BILL

The Conference Committee, Chaired by Rep. Hummel, (R-Clinton), unanimously approved the FY 2007 Omnibus Budget Bill (HB 5796) but not before removing five State agencies from the Bill, transportation was not one of them. Agencies removed from the Bill were; Community Health, Corrections, Education, Environmental Quality and Natural Resources. Those budget bills were covered by Senate Appropriations Budget Bills approved last week.

The Transportation portion of the Omnibus Budget Bill is an exact duplicate of the Senate Appropriations Budget Bill (SB 1097) approved last week. See last week's CRAM Legislative Update for some general budget numbers and related issues.

The agencies that remain in the Omnibus Budget Bill include; Agriculture, History, Arts and Libraries, Human Services, Judiciary, Labor and Economic Growth, Military and Veterans Affairs, State Police and Transportation. The Bill also includes the General Government Budget, which includes the Attorney General, Civil Rights, Civil Service, Executive, Information Technology, Legislature, Auditor General, Management and Budget, State, and Treasury budgets.

STOP OVERSPENDING (SOS) BALLOT PROPOSAL

The Michigan Townships Association (MTA) held a meeting of local government associations (CRAM, MAC, MML, County Drain Commissioners), at their facility in Lansing, to discuss the direct impact local governments will have deal with should the SOS ballot proposal pass. The meeting also included representatives from education and from the Defend Michigan Coalition (Roger Martin). At first blush, and even as one dives into the body of the SOS proposal, there is nothing good that can be said for it. It would have wide-reaching and long-term negative impacts on all areas of state and local government (including human and public safety services) and it needs to be stopped.

In a nutshell, the objectives of the proposal are to:

1. Prohibit any future State contribution to any type of a retirement benefit for legislators.
2. Limit State spending to no more than the amount of State expenditures for the prior year adjusted for inflation and population change.
3. Mandate voter approval for any local government special assessment, any multi-fiscal year indebtedness and to implement or increase any mandatory user fee.

The proposal's limitations on the imposition of special assessments, the imposition of—or increase of— mandatory user fees, and multi-fiscal year indebtedness would impact road commissions in the same way as it would other local government entities. Impacts would vary depending on your relationship, regarding special assessments or millages, with your local governments. This will impact all of us one way or another and needs further discussion. The extremely restrictive limitations on State spending will have the greatest impact on the ability of road commissions to meet increased costs because the largest source of revenue for road commissions is from the distribution of a statutory percentage of the Michigan Transportation Fund (MTF) revenue collected from State taxes on motor fuels and motor vehicle registrations.

This is an early review of the SOS proposal and draft information papers, presented at the Local Government Coalition group meeting, need further review by CRAM and its legal counsel. This anti-transportation ballet proposal needs our full attention if we are going to protect, maintain and/or increase funding levels for our roads and bridges. As strategies and information (media/public meeting talking points, resolution, etc.) develop, CRAM will keep you informed.

LOCAL JOBS TODAY / LOCAL FEDERAL MATCH PROGRAM
According to State officials the project announcement has been pushed back one week.

NO NEW TRANSPORTATION RELATED BILLS WERE INTRODUCED.

# Managing Congestion: Can We Do Better?

## *ITE 2007 Technical Conference & Exhibit*

March 25-28, 2007
Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina - San Diego
For more information, visit: www.ite.org/Conference

**Share your expertise!**

ITE is seeking instructors for its Web seminar/briefing professional development program. If you are interested in instructing a course please contact Aliyah N. Horton; 202-289-0222 ext. 137 at ITE Headquarters.

# - - - INDUSTRY NEWS - - -

## McDaniel Appointed to Louisiana Tech Foundation Board

Kimberly D. McDaniel, PE, a Traffic Engineer with Spalding DeDecker Associates in Rochester Hills, was recently appointed to the position of Associate Director for the Louisiana Tech University Engineering and Science Foundation Board of Directors. The LaTech ESF Board assist the leadership team of the college in decisions regarding tuition, budget, scholarship, student involvement, and recognition. McDaniel is the youngest member to be appointed to the Board. She is a 2003 graduate of Louisiana Tech University in Civil Engineering. Kimberly also recently received her PE license in the State of Michigan.

## George E. Hubbell Named President of Hubbell, Roth, & Clark, Inc.

Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc. (HRC) announces that George E. Hubbell II, P.E., DEE, has been named President of the firm effective January 2006. Mr. Hubbell assumes this leadership position immediately following the celebration of the firm's 90th anniversary in 2005. As fourth generation successor, Mr. Hubbell follows in the footsteps of his great grandfather, Clarence W. Hubbell, founder and firm visionary who provided innovative engineering solutions for the City of Detroit's growing population in the early twentieth century. As a 26-year veteran of the firm, most recently as Vice-President/Treasurer, Mr. Hubbell serves as principal-in-charge for general engineering services for several communities in Southeast Michigan. Mr. Hubbell holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Michigan State University and a master's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Michigan. HRC is a full-service multi-disciplined consulting engineering firm providing professional services to Michigan communities for over 90 years. HRC provides municipal, transportation, environmental, and industrial engineering services throughout southeastern Michigan, in addition to servicing various national clients. HRC is headquartered in Bloomfield Hills, with offices in Howell, Mt. Clemens, Detroit, and Pontiac.

Do you have Industry News you'd like to share?
Email it to Kimberly at
kmcdaniel@spaldingdedecker.com

# A Note from Your MichiganITE Newletter Editor

I hope you've enjoyed the new format of the MichiganITE newsletter. The electronic delivery for most members has definitely saved our chapter some money. However, if you wish to receive a printed copy in the mail, please contact me at kmcdaniel@spaldingdedecker.com or (248) 844-5400, and I'd be happy to add you to our mail list. I also want to thank all of our advertisers for sticking with us through this transition period. Your continued support of our efforts does not go unnoticed. Putting together the newletter takes some time, but the hardest part is finding content. In order for our newsletter to continue to improve, we need your help! If you have something that you think other ITE members might enjoy reading, please send it to me. It can be an article, a news release, an opinion piece, and update on new regulations or technology, announcements of classes, or a picture for the "All in a Day's Work" section. I appreciate any assistance you can provide in this regard. I'm working hard to get two more editions of this newsletter published before the end of the year, so send submissions my way! Thanks for the opportunity to serve as your MichiganITE Newletter Editor.

Kimberly McDaniel, PE

# All in a Day's Work...





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