

Supplemental information to presentation on the Take Turns (TT) sign, which can be downloaded at:

<http://www.lauderpartners.com/sign/>

That presentation has supplemental information as well in the form of notes, hidden slides and slides that were beyond the end of what was shown. This information should be read AFTER hearing the presentation (audio contains some info that's not printed) AND reading the presentation and its notes (contains info not in the audio/video).

I am available to be contacted by people who are pertinent to this (e.g. traffic engineers, city planners, politicians, journalists, etc., but ask that if you are just another citizen like me (I have no special qualifications), then please don't contact me to debate this. Suggestions are welcome from all. If anyone wants to adopt the idea and push it forward, consider yourself deputized. I don't have the time to do that properly. I can be e-mailed at gary@lauderpartners.com.

Some have speculated that this is a joke. Aspects of it may be funny, but it's not (to me anyway). Remember, the inspiration for this started with my getting a traffic ticket for rolling through a stop sign in a circumstance that was completely safe, so I'm annoyed that nobody has solved this problem yet. I thought about going straight to the bodies that might consider this, but then I realized it would have to become my crusade. Since I have a day job, I am hoping that others will take this up.

There is a process for innovation of roads and signs that is outlined here:

<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/condexper.htm>

and here is a flowchart of the process:

<http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/experflow.htm>

I believe the ideal environment in which this could be tried would be an island or small town (that's not near a metropolis) in which almost every driver can get the message as to what the new sign means prior to experiencing it. If it works out well for that town, then larger locations could adopt it with larger public education efforts. It would be a mistake for a town that has a high proportion of drivers from elsewhere to try this out. An early negative experience could cause people to be unwilling to try it again.

Explanation of usage: It is for placement on the major road that intersects with one or two minor roads. In other words 3 or 4-way intersections. The minor road(s) would still have to have (a) stop sign(s). There is no safe scenario that I can think of for this being used at all 3 or 4 directions in an intersection. The person who is stopped at the stop sign on the minor road should only proceed when it is clear that both directions of traffic are slowing or stopped. If you are on the major road and you are approaching an intersection w/a TT sign facing you and no car is waiting at the intersection to go/turn across your lane, you do not need to slow down. Cars headed in the opposite direction that are waiting to turn across your lane should be treated the same way as a car waiting on the minor road. If there is a car there, one should treat the TT sign as if it were a stop sign. If multiple cars are waiting, then

each party would take turns in the same way as they would with stop signs. In order to assess whether there is a car waiting, you have to be able to see it from far enough away to safely stop. Given the economic value of NOT putting a stop sign in, the city should have the right to make sure that the sight lines are clear of obstructions. This could be done by zoning, eminent domain, pruning shears, etc. The TT should apply to pedestrians (i.e. cars should stop for them), however whether this (or any of this) becomes the official policy should really be determined by the experts who would consider and potentially adopt this proposed sign. If that were left out, it could still be accomplished with a "Yield to Pedestrians" sign, but sign proliferation is a real problem. This sign should not add to that problem because it is a new TYPE of sign, but it should primarily be replacing existing signs so the total # of signs should not increase much.

The purpose of the sign is not to encourage people to be polite. The purpose is to ALLOW people to legally and safely do what is best for them and the environment in a common type of intersection. Presently with stop signs, it is illegal not to come to a complete stop, even if you can clearly see that there is nothing to stop for. This is a stupid situation. The law should not compel that which violates common sense and what's best for the environment and one's time and money (gas & car wear). The advent of this sign can also solve the corollary problem of intersections where the major road does NOT have a stop sign, so the minor road gets very backed up waiting for an opportunity to safely turn or cross (particularly during rush hours). The great frustration of waiting for one's chance to jump in is a major source of accidents. The absence of a stop sign is due to the city not wanting to impose on everyone to stop (which is healthy), but it creates the problem on the minor road. Adding a TT sign can make it safer and less frustrating while not imposing the problems that a stop sign would have.

Any innovation in signs has to be accompanied with public education, and it is unrealistic to assume that this info will penetrate all minds, so it's important to assess the failure modes. If someone stops when they did not need to, there is little problem. If someone fails to stop, there may be anger, but there should not be an accident since the car that was stopped at the intersection should not have proceeded until it was clear that the other car was stopping.

Alternative names: "Stopless" sign suggested by Will Donaldson. "Stoptional" suggested by Shannon Pfaff. (Neither would work for the text on the sign though).
Similar signs: STOLD & YOP (with a bit of tongue in cheek):
<http://priups.com/rikblog/mar06/060328-yopstold.htm>

Image of sign is offered under the Creative Commons license referenced below:



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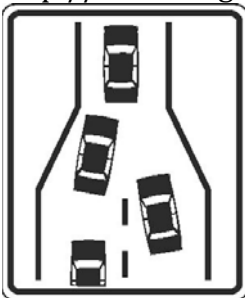


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In the TED talk it said: “IF CARS ARE WAITING...” but at the suggestion of a commenter, I changed it since there might be other types (e.g. bikes). It has been suggested that one of the best things about the above sign is that it’s shaped like an ice cream cone.

There are and have been signs that urge people to take turns/alternate when merging. This has nothing to do with that. Here is one example:

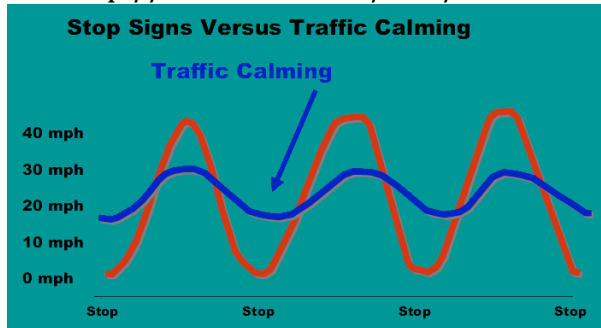
<http://www.dc.gov.si/fileadmin/dc.gov.si/pageuploads/slike/zadrga.jpeg>



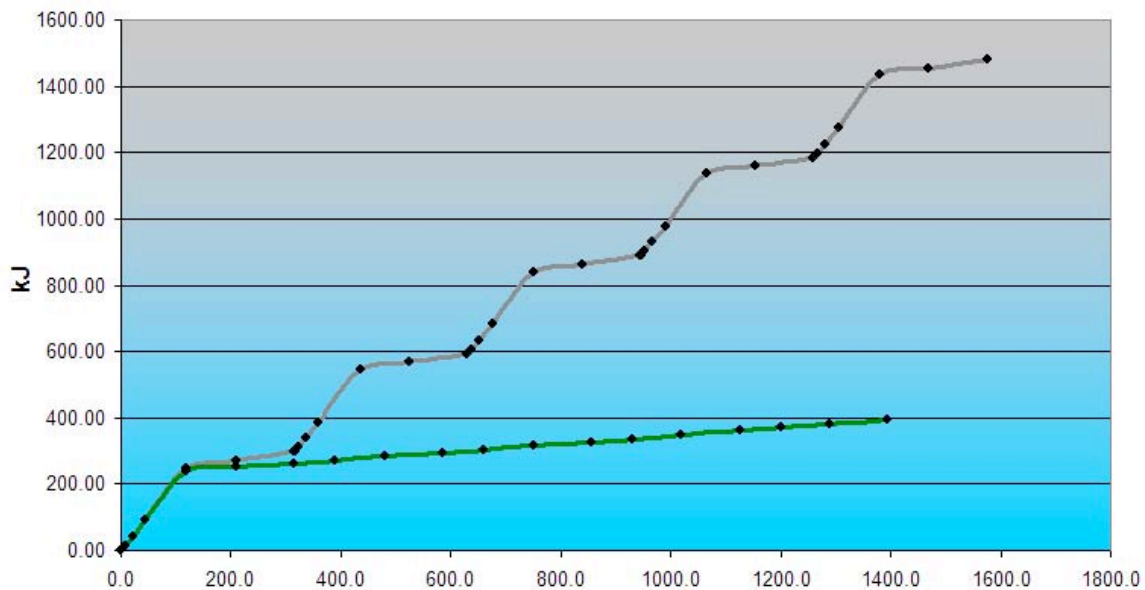
A small problem X many occurrences = Big problem, but not big enough to each person to bother to do anything about.

Stop signs are sometimes used for “traffic calming” (getting people to drive more slowly. Studies have found that people go much faster between such signs and that it’s not safer. For a graphical depiction, see below.

http://seeclickfix.com/files/comment_images/0000/1559/stopsigns.gif



This graph shows the energy wasted by a car from the above type of stop signs.



<http://www.triplepundit.com/Stop%26Go.jpg>

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The 1970’s energy crisis was effectively used to improve traffic flows a bit, so we should not let this crisis go to waste. “Right turn on red has been practiced in the western United States for more than 50 years, with the eastern states adopting the law in the 1970s to save fuel (see 1973 oil crisis and 1979 energy crisis).” [Ironic since the only energy savings is by less idling].

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_on_red

Article about yield signs, which were new at that time. Estimated each time of coming to a complete stop costs 5 cents. Since then, MPG up, but \$/gallon up too.

St. Petersburg Times - Sep 9, 1956

<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=888&dat=19560909&id=adENAAAIBA&sjid=KXYDAAAIBA&pg=4992,3646734>

In case anyone thought that I was making the numbers up, you can see that I was actually being conservative. A major variable is how busy the intersection is. The following is from a Troy, MI study cited below:

Economics of Multi-Way Stop Signs

Studies have found that installing unwarranted stop signs increases operating costs for the traveling public. The operating costs involve vehicle operating costs, costs for increased delay and travel time, cost to enforce signs, and costs for fines and increases in insurance premiums.

The total costs are as follows (Reference 55):

Operating Costs (1990) \$ 111,737/year
(\$0.04291/Stop)

Delay & Travel Costs (1990) \$ 88,556 /year
(\$0.03401/Stop)

Enforcement Costs (1990) \$ 837/year
Cost of Fines (19 per year) \$ 1,045/year

Cost of 2 stop signs (1990) \$ 280

Costs of increased insurance (1990) \$7,606/year

Total (1990) \$210,061/year/intersection

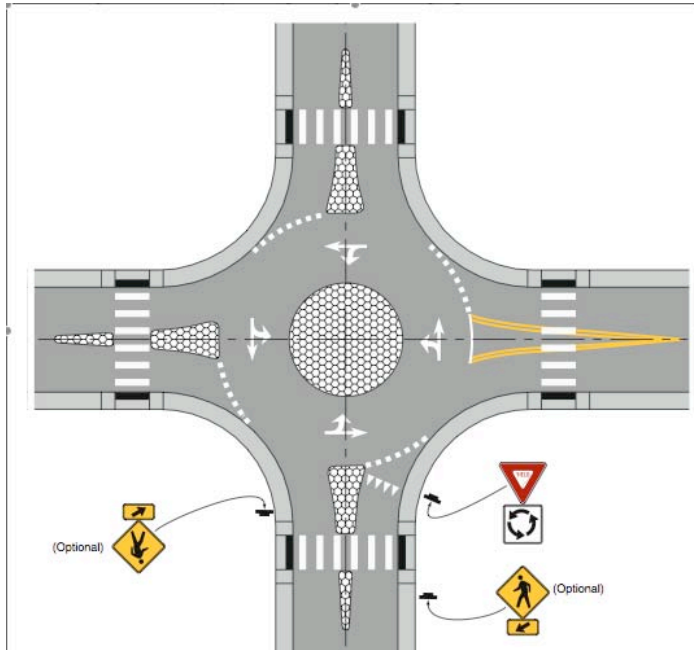
The cost to install two stop signs is \$280. The cost to the traveling public is \$210,061 (1990) per year in operating costs. This cost is based on about 8,000 vehicles entering the intersection per day.

Another study (62) found that the average annual road user cost increased by \$2,402.92 (1988 cost) per intersection when converting from two to four way stop signs for low volume intersections.

<http://www.troymi.gov/trafficengineering/multiway.htm>

<http://infolab.stanford.edu/~ullman/pub/traffic.html>

Modern roundabout design:



Roundabouts are not the same as rotaries nor traffic circles. See:
<http://www.alaskaroundabouts.com/mythfact1.html>

Great info on them is available at:
<http://www.azdot.gov/CCPartnerships/Roundabouts/index.asp>

Article/interview of me on this:
<http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/03/16/lauder.new.road.sign/index.html>

For extensive Q&A (including all manner of inane comments) see the comments at:
http://www.ted.com/talks/gary_lauder_s_new_traffic_sign_take_turns.html

I responded to those.

The above CNN article is followed by many comments and some responses from me.

http://www.youtube.com/all_comments?v=qlty00PcU6k

I have not responded to those. Only so many hours in the day...