

Wisconsin County/City Traffic Safety Commission Guidelines



**Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation Safety
funded by
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
&
Federal Highway Administration**

Purpose

Each year in every county in Wisconsin, a group of local citizens meet at least quarterly to review and make recommendations about traffic safety problems. Members include representatives from law enforcement, education, the legal profession, medicine, highway engineering, highway safety and citizen groups concerned about traffic safety. This group constitutes a Traffic Safety Commission (TSC).

This booklet describes and explains the activities and responsibilities of TSC's.

Persons with traffic safety concerns or interests should contact their county clerk for the name of their County Highway Safety Coordinator.



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Dedication

This booklet is dedicated to the hundreds of women and men who volunteer thousands of hours every year to make Wisconsin's roadways safer for all users --to the volunteer members of Wisconsin's Traffic Safety Commissions.

THANK YOU.



I. Why were Traffic Safety Commissions (TSC's) created?

Each year thousands of Wisconsin residents are injured and killed in traffic crashes. In recognition of the familial and societal costs of these tragedies, the legislature called for the creation of TSC's in every county in 1971. These Commissions are intended to be a means of bringing local and state expertise to the task of minimizing the incidence and severity of traffic crashes.

Because of the complex causes of traffic crashes, the legislature required a breadth of expertise to serve on these Commissions. TSC membership is also broad-based to foster a coordinated effort among various traffic safety professionals, agencies, and representatives of citizen organizations.



II. Who's on the Commission?



A. Required representation

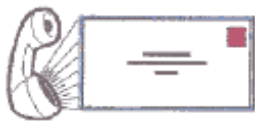
Each Commission is required to have at least the following nine members:

1. The County Highway Commissioner or a designated representative.
2. The Chief County Law Enforcement Officer or a designated representative.
3. The County Highway Safety Coordinator, designated by the County Board.
4. An Education Representative designated by the County Board.
5. A Medical Representative designated by the County Board (e.g., doctor, nurse, hospital administrator, paramedic, etc.).
6. A Legal Representative designated by the County Board.
7. A Division of State Patrol Representative designated by Wisconsin Department of Transportation. (WisDOT) .
8. A Highway Engineering Representative designated by WisDOT .
9. A Traffic Safety Representative designated by WisDOT (Bureau of Transportation Safety, Regional Program Manager).

B. Optional Additional Representation

Additional representation is encouraged; counties may appoint additional persons: elected officials, representatives from citizen organizations and other civic leaders concerned with traffic safety (~g. , Mother's Against Drunk Drivers, Students Against Driving Drunk, Wo/Men Highway Safety Leaders, Railroad representatives, etc.), news media representatives, and county highway committee members. .

M. What are the responsibilities of TSC members?



Membership is similar to holding a seat on a county board.
Members are expected to:

- A. Represent the interests of their constituency. (health, engineering, enforcement, citizen groups, etc.).
- B. Offer solutions to traffic safety related problems that are brought to the Commission.
- C. Report back to their constituency.



TV. What can TSCs do to be effective?

A. Direct Action Groups

TSCs are most effective by taking direct action. TSCs can:

1. *Alert elected officials, state or local, to traffic safety problems. If appropriate, request that legislation be introduced or budgets modified to address the problem.*
2. *Encourage and foster traffic safety activity in the county and its cities and towns.* TSCs can work with local community leaders to foster and encourage traffic safety education efforts and events (e.g., bike rodeos, pedestrian safety education, etc.).
3. *Conduct traffic safety assessments and field reviews.* TSCs can visit and examine high crash sites or sites where crash problems are developing, review video tapes of problem intersections, request presentations from enforcement officials, organize county-wide community traffic safety assessments, etc.
4. *Take positions on traffic safety issues and legislation.* TSCs can take positions. Commissions are encouraged to express their opinions in writing to the appropriate elected officials.
5. *Recommend specific traffic safety improvements* to be included in local agency budgets, federal highway programs, hazard elimination projects, etc.

A TSC is only as effective as its individual members choose to make it. Individual Commission members must respond to local traffic safety problems.

Direct Action Example:

In response to a high incidence of speed-related crashes on a particular highway segment, a TSC might:

1. Direct a letter to appropriate law enforcement agencies requesting increased enforcement in a problem area.
2. Ask a TSC engineer representative to examine the highway segment for possible engineering-related problems (signing, roadway, width, etc.).
3. Write a news release and invite the news media to cover the issue.
4. Develop an informational flyer regarding the problem for distribution in the county.
5. Recommend a specific safety improvement or activity to be included in a local or state budget.

B. Administrative Options

Certain Administrative actions can help make the TSC more effective. TSC's can:

1. *Develop a mission statement and work plan.*
TSC's can develop written mission statements that describe the purpose, objectives and goals of the Commission, describe member responsibilities, and set priorities and a process for meeting these priority needs. This mission statement can be reviewed and modified annually or as necessary.
2. *Provide mentor training for new members.*
New members will need to learn how the Commission operates and how it takes action to solve problems. One effective method of educating a new member is to assign a more experienced member to serve as a mentor.
3. *Send copies of TSC meeting minutes to local elected officials.*

C. Public Information and Education Options

The effectiveness of a TSC is enhanced if citizens and elected officials are familiar with the Commission and its operations. Public recognition can be fostered by the following activities:



1. *Distribute news releases and traffic safety educational materials.*
2. *Produce and distribute a newsletter* describing local and state traffic safety issues, TSC actions, availability of educational materials, upcoming traffic safety conferences and events, etc.
3. *Prepare and distribute periodic reports* for the public. TSC's can provide written annual or periodic reports regarding the activities of the Commission and make these available to the public and news media.
4. *Develop an informational flyer* regarding traffic safety problems.
5. *Encourage citizens to attend meetings and bring traffic safety issues to TSCmembers.*
6. *Provide public recognition of traffic safety efforts.* TSC's can publicly recognize citizens and public officials, including individual members of the Commission, for their efforts to improve safety .



D. Coordination and Consultation Options.

TSC's become more effective by working in cooperation with others. TSC's can:

1. *Serve as consultant* to counties, cities, towns and public agencies regarding traffic safety problems in their jurisdiction.
2. *Coordinate local traffic safety activities* (e.g., area meetings to develop traffic safety plans and projects).
3. *Develop coalitions with other TSC's.*
4. *Form regional TSC networks or common problem networks.*
5. *Hold periodic joint meetings with other TSC's.*

E. Training Options

1. *Attend traffic safety related training* (entire TSC or individual members).
2. *Have TSC members conduct training for other members.*
3. *Send members to annual Governor's Conference on Highway Safety.*

V. What are the requirements and guidelines for TSC meetings?

A. TSCs are *required* to:

1. Meet at least quarterly.
2. Post a meeting notice at least one week prior to meeting dates (include news media in the meeting announcement).
3. Review traffic crash data from the county/city (e.g. , crash reports, spot maps, etc.).

4. Review other traffic safety related information (citation data, engineering studies, speed studies, etc.).
5. Prepare and maintain a spot map of traffic crash locations.
6. Send recommendations for corrective actions in writing to appropriate governmental officials, businesses and other interested groups.
7. File a report on each meeting with the Bureau of Transportation Safety (BOTS).

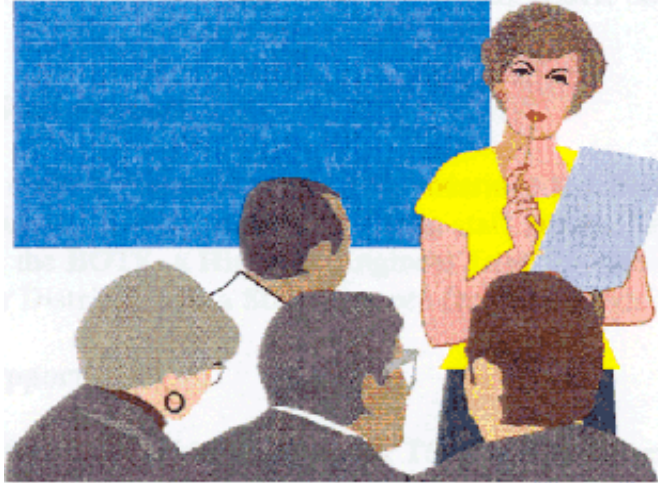
B. It is also *suggested* that TSC's:

- I. Establish a regular meeting time and date.
2. Consider meeting more frequently than quarterly.
3. Maintain Minutes including subjects discussed, solutions recommended and other actions taken.
4. Provide sufficient advance notice of meetings to all persons and organizations directly involved with traffic safety concerns on the agenda.
5. Adopt bylaws to define how the TSC will function.
6. Hold annual election of officers including a chairperson, vice-chairperson and recording secretary (election of a treasurer may also be appropriate).
7. Provide copies of Minutes to other appropriate entities such as County Board members, citizens groups, and other interested organizations.
8. Maintain full Commission membership (no vacancies or continuing absences).

VI. TSC Resources

TSC's have access to a variety of resources that support their traffic safety functions including:

A. Training and Conferences.



Training workshops for traffic safety activists is available at the annual Governor's Highway Safety Conference, at the annual County Highway Coordinators Conference and at other special conferences.



B. Crash Data

The WisDOT provides analyses of crash data in several formats. This includes quarterly crash reports by county, annual crash analyses and special crash analyses. Additionally, every community and county has the option of participating in the Safe Communities - Wisconsin project which uses local coalitions to analyze local traffic safety problems and resources and develops local solutions to identified problems.

C. Bureau of Transportation Safety Grants

Each year a limited number of traffic safety education and enforcement and engineering grants are available from the BOTS. These grants are offered to enforcement jurisdictions, communities, counties, health departments and school districts, primarily based upon a BOTS analysis of crash data. Other grants may be available including bike and pedestrian educational programs, certain first responder equipment and training needs and certain traffic safety engineering studies.

D. WisDOT Staff Support

The WisDOT sends representatives to TSC meetings and these staff are available for support and consultation. These staff are the Regional Program Manager from the BOTS, a Highway Engineer from the Division of Transportation Districts, and a State Trooper from the Division of State Patrol.

E. County Support

Some County Boards provide a budget for TSC's to support expenses related to holding TSC meetings and such activities as attending conferences and training sessions, purchasing equipment such as computers and preparing public information and education materials .

For additional copies of this booklet, or for information about transportation safety programs in Wisconsin, call the Bureau of Transportation Safety at 608/266-0402.