

# NTTA LANE CLOSURE GUIDELINES

## ***Introduction***

The North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) Lane Closure Guidelines implement the NTTA's Mission to provide a safe and reliable toll road system by the definition of a business process and identification of the associated guiding principles. All closures on the NTTA system should be handled as practically allowed to minimize traffic impact and ensure safety compliance. Additional efforts should also be devoted to inform the traveling public, coordinate with other transportation agencies, and avoid conflicts between contractors and maintenance activities.

The following sections describe the detailed procedures of the lane closure request submission and approval process as well as some special considerations.

## ***Request Submission***

The NTTA Maintenance Department and the System Incident Management (SIM) Department are collectively responsible for the general maintenance and incident response of the NTTA roadway system. Any planned closure on NTTA roadways, including travel lanes and shoulders, or other activities that might impact the traffic flow and safety of the traveling public, must be reported in advance to the NTTA Lane Closure Management Team (LCM Team) for review and approval. The LCM Team members include the NTTA Traffic Engineer and his/her designees within the Maintenance Department. The Traffic and Emergency Management Coordinator (TEMC) from SIM Department is responsible for assisting the coordination with other agencies and first responders as necessary.

All closure requests must be submitted using the NTTA Lane Closure Request Form or by other means approved by the Authority. The request form shall be completed thoroughly with applicable information such as closure date, duration, locations, brief description of work category, reason for the closure, as well as the contact information (cell phone number and email address) of the persons responsible for all related issues during the closures.

Advance notification, as specified below, is required for each closure:

1. Major Closures (10 Business Days prior to requested date of closure)
  - a. Complete roadway closures
  - b. Multiple lanes or major ramp closures where either impact is estimated to be significant or traffic needs to be detoured outside of the corridor
  - c. Starting a new construction project
  - d. Major switch in traffic or construction stage change
  - e. Work to be completed by a franchise utility company
2. Minor Closures (3 Business Days prior to requested date of closure)
  - a. Closures for routine maintenance activities not defined as major closures above
  - b. Rolling lane closures (with intermittent stops up to 15 minutes)
  - c. Shoulder Closures
  - d. Lane closures associated with an ongoing construction project that are not defined as major closures above

For all closures on NTTA roadways, a traffic control plan is required. Any associated detours and proposed messages to the public should also be submitted at the same time. These

documents will be reviewed to determine if the request is approved or any adjustment is required.

In case of Emergency Closures, the NTTA Command Center (214-224-2203) shall be notified immediately. The Command Center will then notify appropriate personnel, including various NTTA Departments and Executive Staff as necessitated by the situations.

### ***Review and Approval Process***

All closure requests submitted within the specified time frame will be reviewed by members of the Lane Closure Team. The requests will be evaluated based on the closures' potential impact on the traffic levels of service, safety, and other considerations such as toll revenue and customers' overall travel convenience. Coordination with other government agencies will also be performed when a closure is expected to impact a facility outside of the NTTA system. Approval or rejection will be sent to the requestor at least five (5) business days prior to the start date of a major closure, or at least two (2) business days prior to a minor closure.

Following the approval issued by the NTTA Lane Closure Management Team, appropriate warning signs should be installed to inform motorists about the planned closures and alternative route choices. Portable Changeable Message Signs (PCMS) shall be installed for any planned major closure. The PCMS should be in place no less than three (3) business days prior to the major closures or one (1) business day for minor closures. It is the responsibility of the lane closure requestor to arrange for the procurement and installation of the required devices.

Copies of the approval notice will also be sent to the pertinent NTTA Department staff and executive members as necessary. In the event of a schedule change or emergency situation, the requestor shall notify the NTTA Lane Closure Management Team or NTTA Command Center immediately. Follow-up documentation of the closure details should also be submitted for NTTA's record.

### ***Special Considerations***

The guiding principles of the NTTA lane closure process are to minimize traffic impact, ensure work zone safety, and maintain a high level of customer service via proactive communication. It is also recognized that some projects, due to the constructability, material availability, and weather conditions, might necessitate adjustment to the typical closure requirements under the normal circumstances. This kind of special consideration should be requested by the contractor or construction manager during the project planning stage. A detailed closure schedule and mitigation plan should be submitted by the project staff and approved by the closure team members prior to the project start date. It should be noted that any such special consideration does not relieve the requestor's responsibilities to make sure the requested closures meet the requirements set forth in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). NTTA lane closure team might suggest measures in addition to the standard closure setups considering the special characteristics of the tollway operations and customers' expectation.

Generally, all closures should be scheduled for the time periods with the least impact on tollway operations. Closures of any travel lane or shoulder are not allowed during the weekday peak hours (typically 6AM to 9AM, and 4PM to 7PM). Unless justified otherwise, all closures should be scheduled for weekday night-time (8PM to 5AM, Sunday through Thursday) or weekend daytime (7AM to 7PM, Saturday and Sunday). Closures during weekday daytime are generally limited to emergency situations only or locations where the resulting traffic levels of service and safety performances are deemed acceptable by the closure team, and are approved on a case by case basis. Closures should be avoided during major holidays such as New Year's Eve and Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day and Eve.

In the event of any breach of the Guidelines including commencement of an unapproved closure or continuation of a closure beyond the approved time periods, warnings will be issued to the

requestor with immediate corrective actions expected. Any repeated breach shall constitute adequate cause for financial or legal actions by the Authority which could include assessment of a fine equal to any revenue lost, congestion cost, or liability incurred, as well as the annulment of a contract due to the Contractor's non compliance with the NTTA Lane Closure Guidelines.

The Lane Closure Management Team has final discretion in approving or rejecting all requested closures on NTTA roadways, unless otherwise directed by the NTTA executive in charge.