



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

October 5, 2005

Refer to: HOTO-1

Ms. Ina Heffner
Associate Vice President
Office of Technology
METRO Planning, Engineering, and Construction
P.O. Box 61429
Houston, TX 77208-1429

Dear Ms. Heffner:

Thank you for your September 20 letter requesting permission to experiment with two unique traffic control device features that do not comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) at two signalized intersections along the Main Street light rail transit line in Houston. At the intersection of Gray Street and Main Street, you propose to install red light emitting diode (LED) borders on the outside perimeter of the signal backplates for the Gray Street approaches. At the intersection of Jefferson Street and Main Street, you propose to install red in-roadway lights (operated with a stutter flash pattern or steadily illuminated) along the stop line of the Jefferson Street approach. These devices would be illuminated concurrently with the red signal indications on the streets crossing the light rail line, in an attempt to improve the visibility and driver awareness of red traffic signal indications on those approaches.

We have reviewed your request and the accompanying evaluation plan and have found them to be satisfactory, with the exception of the proposed special "Stop Here When Lights Flashing" sign. We believe that such a sign is unnecessary and that a standard R10-6 "Stop Here on Red" sign should be used instead. With that one change in your plan, we hereby approve the request for experimentation, for a period of 24 months following the installation of the devices. We look forward to receiving semiannual reports and evaluation results from the experimentation.

For reference purposes, we have assigned the request the following official experimentation number and title: "4-295(E) – Red LED Backplate Border and Red Stop Line Lights – Metrorail Houston." Please refer to this number in future correspondence. We appreciate your interest and effort in improving safety and operations at highway/light rail transit intersections. If we can be of further assistance in this project, please contact Mr. Scott Wainwright by email at scott.wainwright@fhwa.dot.gov or by telephone at 202-366-0857.

Sincerely yours,

Regina S. McElroy
Director, Office of Transportation
Operations

cc: Mr. Roger Wentz, ATSSA

