

RoadSoft

August 2008 Vol. 8, No. 4

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RoundUp

"RoadSoft has always been superb. The development team doesn't just create software, they solve problems."

Joe Waananen, Surveyor
Keweenaw County Road Commission

RoadSoft Focus Groups Explore Development Direction

Over the summer of 2008, RoadSoft users from around the state had the opportunity to participate in focus groups organized by the Technology Development Group (TDG). Focus group members met online, with the objective of discussing RoadSoft's current functionality, and users' needs in regards to future RoadSoft development. Four focus groups were organized: Sign Module Enhancements, Traffic Count Module Development, Utilities Module Development, and Transportation Planning and Reporting.

"RoadSoft is an entirely user-driven piece of software, and the input we receive from users always gives us a better picture of what users really need," said Gary Schlaff, TDG Project Leader. "The focus groups were a way for us to coordinate interest groups to provide specific feedback that we might not hear otherwise."

Focus group notes are being compiled, and a scope of work will be presented at the next RoadSoft Users Group (RUG) meeting, scheduled to be held online on September 10, 2008.

Sign Module

With the upcoming retroreflectivity requirements, the Sign Module group focused its discussion on how RoadSoft can be enhanced to help users manage retroreflectivity requirements in their jurisdictions. With the MUTCD requirement to maintain traffic signs to a set of minimum levels, agencies have until January, 2012 to establish and implement a sign assessment or management method to maintain those levels. Therefore, it is important to develop RoadSoft enhancements within the Sign Module to meet the needs that users have in preparing for the upcoming 2012 deadline. Users recommended including fields for data they will need to track, like sign color and size, as well as areas to designate the assessment or management method used to maintain sign retroreflectivity. Users also discussed how the Laptop Data Collector (LDC) could be updated to make retroreflectivity data collection easier, especially with the consideration of night-time data collection's own unique concerns, not the least of which is safety.

Traffic Count Module

Traffic counts are used in several asset management activities, including collision analysis, roadway improvement planning, and traffic signal timing plans. Currently, RoadSoft's Traffic Counts tools are part of the Road Module; the focus group discussed the possibility of

building a full module for traffic count data and analysis. Users discussed the need to provide for calculation of crash rates and AADT, as well as inclusion of various fields in the module that would enable more extensive traffic count analyses in RoadSoft.

Utilities Module

The Utilities Module focus group's goal was to discuss specifically what a RoadSoft utilities module would consist of to meet user needs, and what level of detail users would need in a RoadSoft tool or module that would be effective across all spectrums. Much discussion revolved around the range of needs between different agencies—from those that are just starting out tracking utility assets to agencies that already have a significant amount of utility data that they would want to be able to import into RoadSoft. As of press time, the Utilities focus group is continuing its discussion of needs, and how RoadSoft might address those needs.

Transportation Planning & Reporting

The Transportation Planning and Reporting focus group investigated what is needed to help agencies meet their local and State-level planning and reporting requirements. Such activities may include applying for transportation project funding or planning and meeting project reporting requirements. The group discussed whether there are current data sets that could be included in RoadSoft that would assist with this goal. User suggestions include providing the ability to describe discrete projects for planning and reporting, and the ability to easily extract information required in MDOT Program Applications, such as Project Location and Limits or Route Type.

Join TDG at Online RUG

The next RUG meeting will be hosted online via a web conference (see back for details). During the meeting, TDG will present its proposed scope of work for the next year, based on focus group discussions, and users will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal.

The Next RUG Meeting is Online:

September 10, 2008 / 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

See reverse for details.

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RoadSoft Users Group Meeting
Online Conference

All RoadSoft users from all regions are welcome.

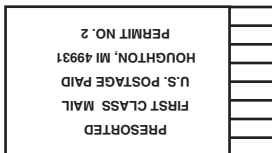
Join us for the online *RoadSoft* Users Group (RUG) meeting. Learn more about recent focus group discussions, and other opportunities for you to influence *RoadSoft* development; share your ideas with *RoadSoft* developers and other users.

Wednesday, September 10, 2008
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

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