



Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	2-1-60
CHAPTER 2	Signing
SECTION 1	General
SUBJECT 60	Community Sensitive Design Signing

A. Purpose

Community Sensitive Design for signing is the incorporation of a sign or logo to blend in architecturally with a structure. There are many requests to utilize Community Sensitive Designs (CSD) for signing along State Maintained Highways. This type of signing can be very popular because they add an aesthetic community value to the roadway. However, there are several policies and guidelines that have to be followed in this approach. 2009 MUTCD [section 1A.01](#) states that Traffic Control Devices or their supports **shall not** bear any advertising message or any other message that is not related to traffic control. Advertising is only allowed on signs off of the highway right-of-way. [Wisconsin State Statute 86.19\(1\)](#) states that no sign **shall** be placed within the limits of any street except such as necessary for the guidance or warning of traffic.

B. Definitions

Freeways are defined as divided arterial highway facilities that have full controlled access, by means of grade separation at interchanges only.

Expressways are defined as divided arterial highway facilities that have partial control of access and generally with grade separations at major intersections.

Conventional Highways are defined as divided or undivided roadway facilities that have limited access with no grade separations at intersections. These highways *may* be two lane or multilane facilities.

C. Policy

Any Community Sensitive Design for signing *should* ensure that the message or logo does not compete with the essential message of any official traffic signs nor create a distraction from conveying essential traffic information. In addition, any Community Sensitive Design for signing needs to ensure that there is no advertising of any kind. Welcome Signs as part of the design aspect of a structure **shall not** be allowed. Stand alone Welcome Signs are covered in TGM 2-1-41.

D. Guidelines

Community Sensitive Designs for signing will be allowed on state maintained roadways provided the following criteria are met:

1. Except for street name identifications (covered in item 2, 3 and 4 below), other word messages **shall not** be used, including wording within logos.
2. Street name identifications *may* be formed into the concrete as part of the structure. They **shall** be independent and not included as part of a logo.
3. On freeways and expressways, street name identifications **shall** be a minimum of 6" lower case / 8" upper case letters, with a minimum letter stroke width equivalent to FHWA Series E.
4. On conventional highways, street name identifications **shall** be a minimum of 4 ½" lower case / 6" upper case letters, with a minimum letter stroke width equivalent to FHWA Series E.
5. Logos or designs **shall not** bear any resemblance to official logos already in place on official guidance or motorist Specific Information Signs (SIS signs).
6. Logos or designs **shall not** bear any resemblance to official advertising, correspondence or municipal logos.
7. Logo and designs, including designs for street name identifications, **shall** be submitted to WisDOT Central Office, Bureau of Highway Operations for review and approval.
8. Any existing non-conforming Community Sensitive Design signing already in place, **shall** be allowed to remain until the end of it's service life. Once the design has reached the end of it's service life, it **shall** be removed and not be replaced.
9. Some architecturally acceptable logos would include logos of:
 - Wildlife
 - State Capitol
 - State Outline
 - Floral Patterns
 - Outlines of City buildings
 - Animals
 - Ships/Boats
10. Internally or externally illuminated logos **shall not** be allowed.
11. Portraits of people **shall not** be allowed.
12. Logos or designs *should* be uniquely related to the community in which the

structure is located.

13. Bridge painting is not allowed to resemble a sign or a message.