



Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	2-6-21
CHAPTER 2	Signs
SECTION 6	Guide Signs - Freeway
SUBJECT 21	Overhead Arrow-Per-Lane Guide Signs

A. Background and Purpose

WisDOT has many interchanges in place that have optional exit/ahead lanes. These types of exits enhance the capacity of the exit ramps while at the same time improve the efficiency of traffic on the mainline. Traditionally, overhead signing has been installed at just the theoretical gore showing a two-lane exit only. This approach has worked with success in many locations. However, this signing approach does not fully emphasize to motorists that the lane adjacent to the exit only lane is an option lane and in some cases this has led to traffic queuing up unnecessarily in the exit lane instead of taking advantage of the optional lane.

The [2009 MUTCD, Section 2E-20](#) requires that Overhead Arrow-Per-Lane or Diagrammatic guide sign designs be used for all multi-lane exits at major interchanges that have an optional exit lane. For all new or reconstructed freeways and expressways that meet the above conditions, the 2009 MUTCD, [Section 2E-21](#) requires that Overhead Arrow-Per-Lane guide signs be used in lieu of Diagrammatic guide sign designs. Diagrammatic guide sign designs are not allowed on new or reconstructed facilities.

It *should* be pointed out that the Overhead Arrow-Per-Lane guide signs *may not* be practical at all interchanges with optional lanes. For example, Overhead Arrow-Per-Lane guide signs *may* be too confusing for an interchange with split exits (A-B). Therefore, in these cases, the 2009 MUTCD, Figures 2E-8 and 2E-9 still allow the usage of down arrows on guide signs.

Technically the Overhead Arrow-Per-Lane guide signs have an arrow over each travel lane. This practice *should* be utilized for system interchanges (freeway-freeway) because at these interchanges, WisDOT has traditionally shown the pull through or ahead movement. However, due to the large size of the signs and the fact that pull through movements have typically not been utilized at service type interchanges, the option for a “truncated” style overhead arrow-per-lane guide sign *should* be available. The “truncated” style overhead arrow-per-lane guide sign only shows one arrow above the optional lane and one arrow above the exiting lane. Even though the usage of the “truncated” style overhead arrow-per-lane guide signs are not adopted as part of the

2009 MUTCD, the General Counsel of the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, endorsed usage of them at the June 2012 meeting.

B. Definitions

System Interchanges are defined as freeway interchanges with other freeways.

Service Interchanges are defined as freeway interchanges with local streets, County Trunk, State Trunk, U.S. or Interstate Highways.

C. Policy

Overhead Arrow Per Lane Guide Signs for System Interchanges (See Figure 1)

1. Overhead arrows *should* be used over each travel lane.
2. Due to the large size of the signs, a vertical splice *should* be placed at about the midpoint of the sign, so future replacement of the sign will be easier for field crews and less disruptive to traffic.
3. The overhead guide sign closest to the gore **shall** be placed at the beginning of taper for the option lane.

Overhead Arrow Per Lane Guide Signs for Service Interchanges (See Figure 2)

1. At a minimum, overhead arrows *should* be utilized for just the option lane and exit only lane. Overhead arrows *may* be omitted for the ahead lanes.
2. The overhead guide sign closest to the gore **shall** be placed at the beginning of taper for the option lane.
3. A size 5 ground mounted regulatory (R3-33) RIGHT LANE MUST EXIT sign *should* be placed downstream of the advanced guide sign(s).

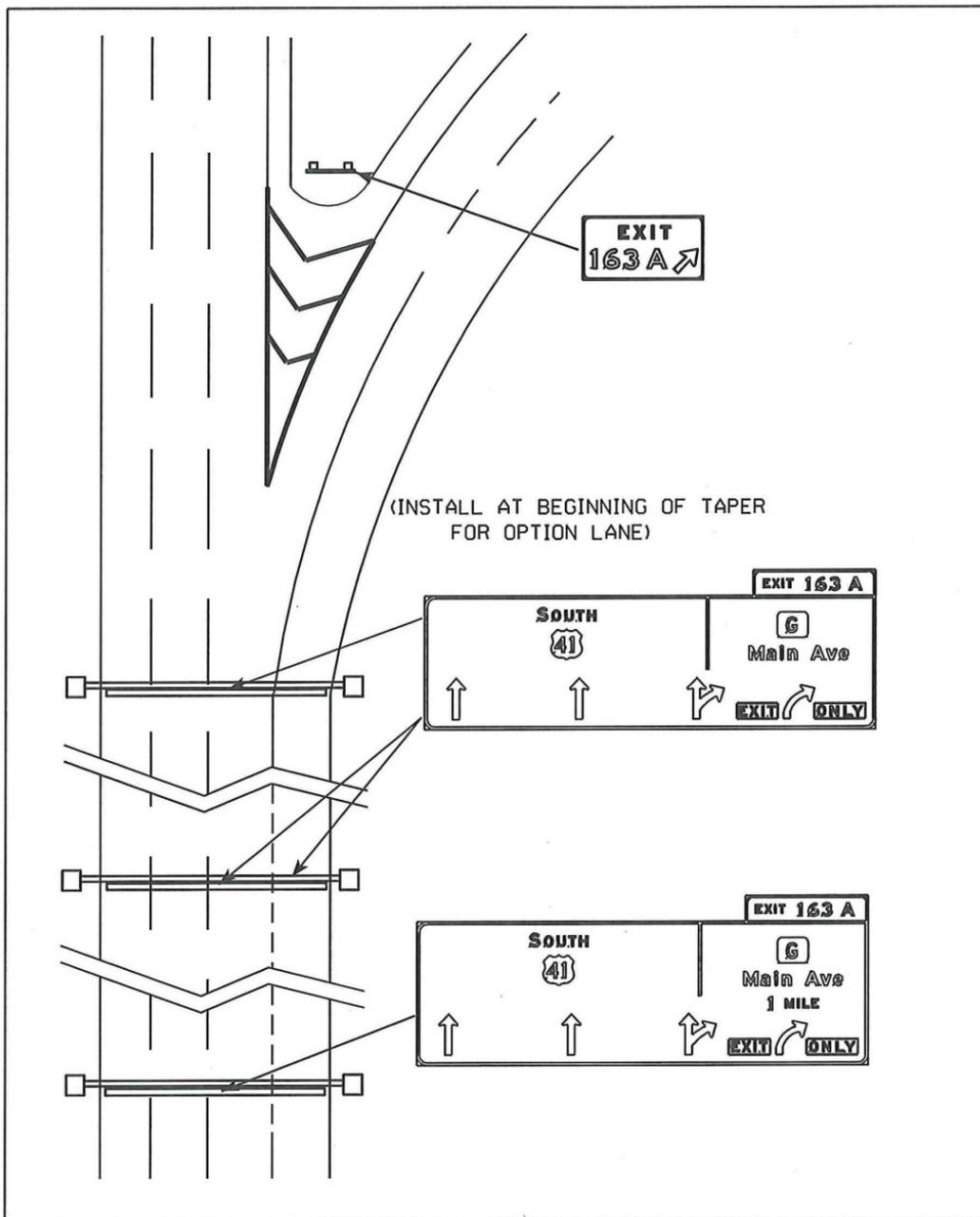
Treatments for Existing Interchanges (Replacing signs on Existing Sign Bridge Structures - See Figure 3)

1. Conventional overhead interchange guide signs *may* continue to be utilized. The Traditional EXIT ONLY (E11-1 series) signs are used over the auxiliary exit lane.
2. The overhead guide sign closest to the gore (with E11-1-E sign) **shall** be placed at the theoretical gore location.
3. A size 5 ground mounted regulatory lane control sign (R3-8-C sign) *should* be placed downstream of the advance guide sign(s).

C. Implementation

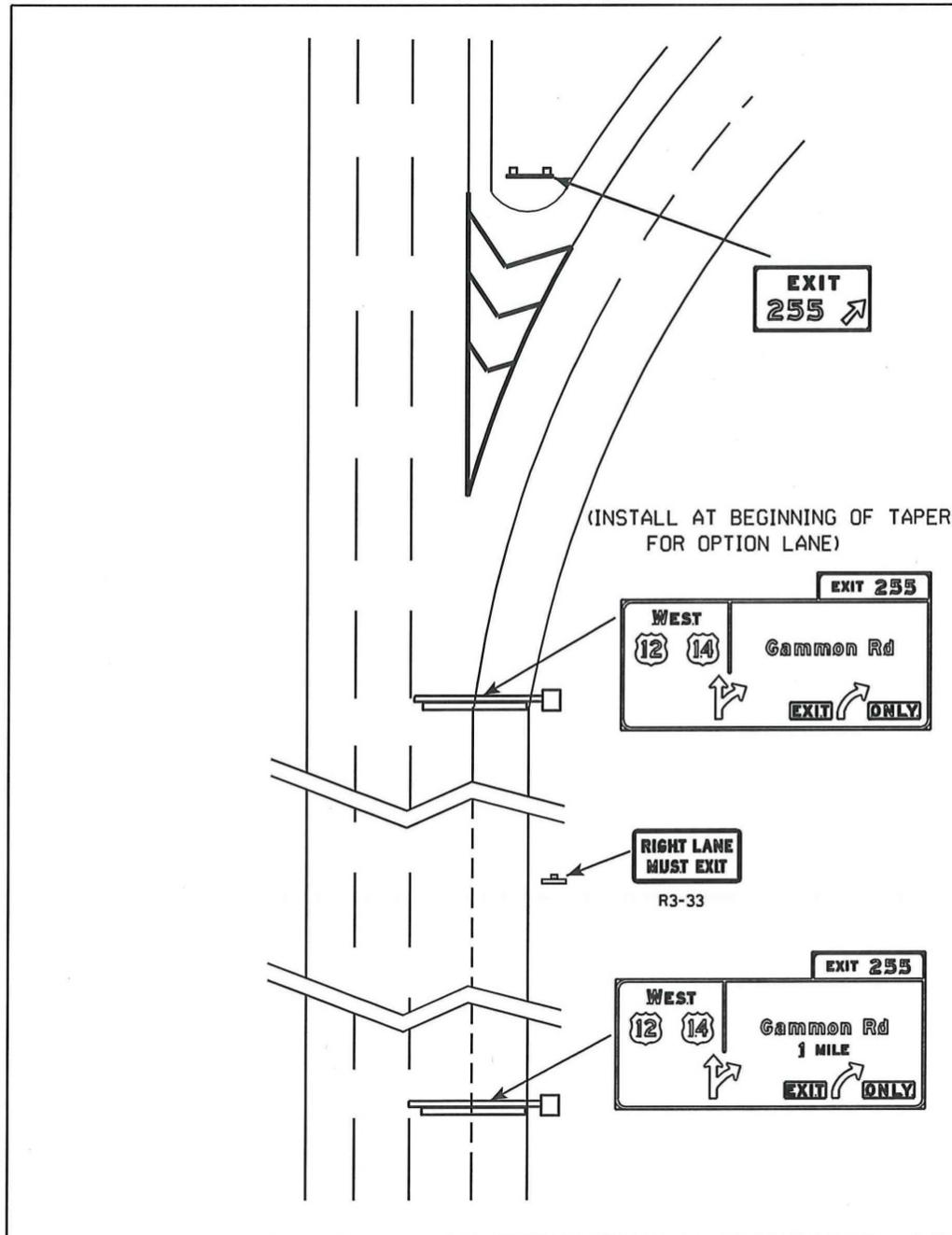
The FHWA does not have a mandated compliance date for this signing. Signing field revisions *should* be accomplished primarily through improvement projects.

Figure 1



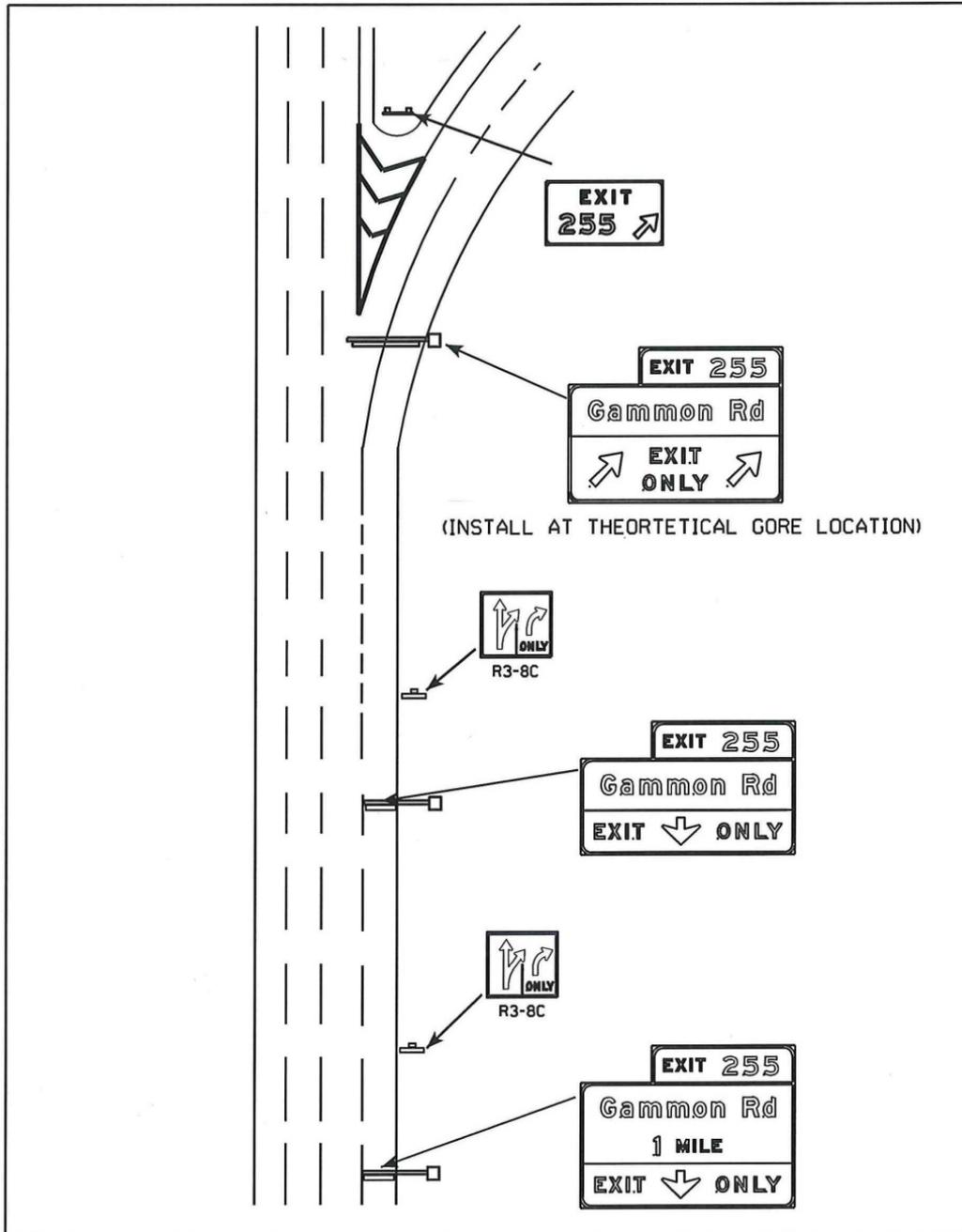
OVERHEAD ARROW PER LANE GUIDE SIGNS FOR SYSTEM INTERCHANGE

Figure 2



OVERHEAD ARROW PER LANE GUIDE SIGNS FOR SERVICE INTERCHANGE

Figure 3



OPTIONAL LANE SIGNING FOR EXISTING INTERCHANGES
(REPLACING SIGNS ON EXISTING SIGN BRIDGE STRUCTURES)