



# Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer		2-15-3
CHAPTER 2	Signing	
SECTION 15	Comprehensive Guiding Policies	
SUBJECT 3	Sign Categories and Policy for Directional Signing	

## PART 1 – DIRECTIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL SIGN REQUESTS

The following is a table intended to provide preliminary information on the eligibility of specific sign requests for installation on the state trunk highway system, including freeways and expressways. It **shall** be used in combination with the rest of this subject, which gives more specific qualifying criteria.

Abbreviations:

Supplemental C: The category for traffic generator supplemental signing on Conventional Highways.

Supplemental F: The category for traffic generator supplemental signing on Freeways.

SS (numbers): A reference to a numbered subsection of the State Statutes.

TGM (numbers): A reference to another subject in the Traffic Guidelines Manual.

Trans 200.nn: A reference to a subsection in Chapter Trans 200 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

DESTINATIONS or INFORMATION	CATEGORIES	AUTHORIZATION	REMARKS
Agricultural Experiment	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Agricultural Farms	Not Permitted		
Air Traffic Control	Not Permitted		
Airport – Major	Govt. Transportation		
Airport – Public General Aviation	Govt. Transportation		
Amtrak Station	Govt. Transportation		
Amusement Parks	Supplemental C, SIS, Guidance Signs	SS 86.195 Trans 200.03	Qualifying Criteria also TGM 2-15-60
Animal Hospitals, Emergency	Not Permitted		
Animal Ranches	Not Permitted		
Animal Shelters	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	
Arboretums	Supplemental C		Qualifying Criteria
Arenas, multi-purpose	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying Criteria
Armories, Reserve Ctrs	Supplemental C		Qualifying Criteria
Arrow Boards	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	aka Guidance signs
Athletic Fields and/or Facilities	Community wayfinder Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-6 Trans 200.03	
Attractions	SIS	SS 86.195	

Auditoriums	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying Criteria
Auto Repair	Not permitted		
Aviation Flight School	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Banners	Information	TGM 13-12-1	
Boat Landings	Inter-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Botanical Gardens	Supplemental C		Same as Arboretums
Braking, Engine (Jake)	Special	TGM 2-2-30	
Bus Terminals	Not Permitted		
Business District	Special Community wayfinder	TGM 2-6-50 TGM 2-15-6	Alternative to “Downtown”
Cabins, Cottages, Non- rental	Not Permitted		
Cabins, Cottages, Rental	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Camping, including Logo	SIS, TODS, Guidance Signs		Category depends upon highway type
Campgrounds (public)	Inter-agency		
Camps, Private	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Canoe, Kayak, Tubing Facilities	TODS	SS 86.196	
Casinos	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying Criteria
Cemeteries	Not permitted		See Veterans Cemeteries
Churches	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
City Hall	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
City Parks	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Civic Centers	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Clinics	Not Permitted		
Colleges	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying Criteria
Community Destination Signs	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	aka “Wayfinder” signs
Community Welcome Signs	Special/Not Permitted	TGM 2-1-41	
Conservation Center	Inter-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Convention Centers	Supplemental F & C Community wayfinder Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-6 Trans 200.03	Qualifying Criteria  Also TGM 2-15-60
Correctional Institutions	Inter-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Country Clubs	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
County Fairgrounds	Inter-agency		
County Institutions (Healthcare Facilities)	Inter-agency, Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
County Parks	Inter-agency		
Courthouses	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Crime Stoppers	Special/Not Permitted		
Cruises, Boat	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Dance Halls	Not Permitted		
D.A.R.E.	Special/Not Permitted		
DMV Service Center	State Govt. Service Centers/Intra-agency		Conventional Hwy only
DNR Service Center	State Govt. Service Centers		Conventional Hwy only
Dog Tracks	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying Criteria
Donation Centers	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Downtown	Special Community wayfinder	TGM 2-6-50 TGM 2-15-6	
Drive-In Theatres	TODS	SS 86.196	

Emergency Medical Treatment	Special	TGM 2-4-45.1 & TGM 2-4-45.2	Emergency Room criteria
Emissions Testing Station	State Govt. Service Centers/Intra-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Environmental Center	Inter-agency Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	Conventional Hwy only, also TGM 2-15-60
Events, Special	Special	TGM 2-15-25	
Exhibition, Exposition Center	Supplemental F & C Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	Qualifying Criteria also TGM 2-15-60
Fairgrounds	Inter-agency		
Factories	Not permitted		
Ferries	Govt. Transportation		
Fish Hatcheries	Inter-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Food, includes logo	SIS, TODS	SS. 86.195 SS 86.196	
Forest boundaries	Not permitted		
Forest Headquarters	Inter-agency		
Freight Terminals	Not Permitted		
Fuel (with logo)	SIS, TODS	SS. 86.195 SS 86.196	
Game Farms	TODS		
Gas, (with logo)	SIS, TODS	SS. 86.195 SS 86.196	
Golf Courses	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Government Offices	State Govt. Service Centers		Also the State Capitol
Gun Clubs, Ranges	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Half-way Houses	Not Permitted		
Health Clubs	Not Permitted		
Heritage Tourism Sites	Program discontinued as of 12/1/13		Also TGM 2-4-52
Highway Departments	Not Permitted		
Highway Maintenance Facilities	Not Permitted		
Historic Buildings	Special or Inter-Agency		Could be Community wayfinder
Historic District / Historic Downtown	Special or Community wayfinder	TGM 2-6-55 TGM 2-15-6	
Historic Neighborhoods	Not Permitted		
Historic Sites	Special or Inter-Agency		Conventional Hwy only
Historic Society Sites	Special or Inter-Agency		
Historical Markers		TGM 2-4-40	
Horseback Riding	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Hospitals	Special	TGM 2-4-45.1	Emergency Room criteria
Hotel (See Lodging)	SIS, TODS, Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Humane Society Shelter	Guidance Signs Community wayfinder	Trans 200.03 TGM 2-15-6	also TGM 2-15-60
Ice Arenas, community	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Industrial Parks	Supplemental C		
Jails	Not Permitted		
Jurisdictional Boundary Signs	Information	TGM 2-1-41	

Kennels	Not Permitted		
Lake, River, Stream	Information	TGM 2-4-55	
Libraries	Community wayfinder Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-6 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Local Parks	Community wayfinder Inter-agency	TGM 2-15-6	
Lodging (with logo) (without logo)	SIS TODS Guidance Signs	SS. 86.195 SS 86.196 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Logos on Signs	SIS	SS. 86.195	also TGM 2-15-4
Main Street Community	Special/Not permitted		
Malls	Not Permitted		
Marinas (Public)	Inter-agency		Qualifying Criteria
Marinas (Privately owned)	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Memorial Facilities	Information	SS. Chapter 84	Legislated
Mental Facilities (Public)	Not Permitted		
Military Academies	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Military Bases, Major	Inter-agency		
Mobile Home Parks	Not Permitted		
Motel (See Lodging)	SIS, TODS, Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Museums	Supplemental F & C TODS, Guidance Signs	SS 86.196 Trans 200.03	Could also be Community Wayfinder
National Forest boundaries	Not Permitted		Off R/W only
National Historic Landmark	Inter-agency		Could also be Historical Marker Guide Signs (TGM 2-4-40)
Neighborhood Watch	Special	ss. 66.0429(2) ss. 60.23(17m)	ss. 86.19 & TGM 2-4-45.3
NEXT (n) EXITS	Information		Primary signing, freeway only
Nursing Homes – Private	Not Permitted		See County Institutions
Office Buildings	Not Permitted		See Government Offices
Orchards	TODS	SS 86.196	
Park & Ride Lots	Govt. Transportation		
Parks, State/county/local	Inter-agency		Or Community wayfinder
Parking Lots, municipal	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Parking Restrictions	Special	ss. 349.13 TGM 2-2-41	WMUTCD 2B.41
Pharmacy	Not Permitted		
Police Stations	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Population Signs	Information	TGM 2-1-41	
Ports	Supplemental F & C		Great Lakes Shipping only
Post Offices	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Power Plants (utilities)	Not Permitted		
Preserves, Nature/Wildlife	Not Permitted		See Wildlife Refuges & Watchable Wildlife
Prisons	Inter-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Private Camps	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Public Access, lake/river	Inter-agency		
Race Tracks	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying criteria
Rail Passenger Stations	Govt. Transportation		Amtrak only
Recreation Trails	Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-15 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60

Recycling Centers	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Rehabilitation Centers	Not Permitted		
Religious Camps	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Religious Worship	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Research Facilities	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Resorts	TODS, Guidance Signs	SS 86.196 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Restaurants	SIS, TODS, Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Retirement Facilities	Not Permitted		
River, Lake, Stream	Information	TGM 2-4-55	
Sanitariums (Public)	Community wayfinder Supplemental C	TGM 2-15-6	
Schools, High, Middle, Elementary	Community wayfinder Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-6 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Scientific Experiment (public owned)	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Seminaries	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Service Organization	Not Permitted		
Sheriff Freeway Patrol Substations	Inter-agency		Freeways Only
Shooting Ranges	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Shopping Centers	Not Permitted		
Ski Areas, Downhill	Inter-agency		
Skiing – Cross Country Trails	Inter-agency		Conventional Hwy only, For trailheads only
Snowmobile Trails (named)		TGM 2-1-50 TGM 2-15-15	
Stadiums	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying criteria
State Forest / State Parks Boundaries	Not Permitted		
State Forest / Parks HQs	Inter-agency		
State Historical Markers		TGM 2-4-40	
State Historic Sites	Supplemental or Inter-agency		Operated by WI Historical Society
State Patrol HQs	Intra-agency		
State Trails	Inter-agency	TGM 2-15-15	
Subdivisions	Not Permitted		
Supper Clubs	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Swimming Pools & Natatoriums	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Synagogue	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Taverns	Not Permitted		
Technical College	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying criteria
Theaters, Live	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Theatres, Movie	Not Permitted		
Tourist Information Centers		TGM 2-6-35	County or Local
Tourist Oriented Directional Signs	TODS category	ss. 86.196, Trans 200.08	
Township Boundary	Not permitted	TGM 2-4-60	
Trails, Recreation	Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-15 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Train rides (Entertainment)	TODS Guidance Signs	SS 86.196 Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Train station	Govt. Transportation		See Amtrak & Rail Passenger Stn

Travel Information	Inter-agency		State Tourism
Tree City	Special / Not Permitted		
Tree Nurseries	Not Permitted		
Truck Stops, Truck Parking	SIS, TODS		
Tubing, River	TODS	SS 86.196	
TV/Radio Stations	Not Permitted		
Unincorporated Communities	Information and/or Special	TGM 2-4-48	
Universities	Supplemental F & C		Qualifying criteria
UW Extension Offices	Not Permitted		
Vehicle Emissions Testing Stations	State Govt. Service Centers/Intra-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Vehicle Registration	State Govt. Service Centers/Intra-agency		Conventional Hwy only
Veterans Cemeteries		TGM 2-15-20	
Veterans Centers	Inter-agency		
Veterans Memorials	Not Permitted		
Vocational Schools	Supplemental F & C		
Watchable Wildlife Area	Inter-agency		DNR designation
Wayfinder Signs	Community wayfinder	TGM 2-15-6	
Welcome To	Not Permitted	TGM 2-1-41	
Wildlife Refuges	Supplemental C Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	Conventional Hwy only, To Instructional Centers only
Wineries	TODS	SS 86.196	
Youth Camps	Guidance Signs	Trans 200.03	also TGM 2-15-60
Zoos	Supplemental F & C Community wayfinder Guidance Signs	TGM 2-15-6 Trans 200.03	Qualifying criteria also TGM 2-15-60

Any facilities, not included in this listing, **shall** be considered non-qualifying and **shall not** be permitted.

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<u>General guidance</u> for freeway & expressway signing begins on	page 12.
<u>General guidance</u> for conventional highway signing begins on	page 16.
<u>Specific guidance</u> for signing in <u>all categories</u> begins on	page 18.
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Specific Information Signs (SIS)	page 26
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<u>Specific guidance</u> for miscellaneous generator supplemental signing on freeways and expressways begins on	page 27
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**PART 2 – DEFINITIONS**

Freeways are defined as divided highways with fully controlled access at interchanges only. Interstate Highways are freeways with the interstate route designation.

Expressways are defined as divided highways with partially controlled access by a combination of interchanges, at-grade intersections, and driveways.

Conventional Highways are defined as streets or roads other than freeways or expressways. They *may* be divided or undivided, two-lane or multi-lane, and access is available at intersections and driveways.

Traffic generators are defined as any facility, activity, or special point of interest which attract large numbers of people, the majority of whom are unfamiliar with the local area and/or access routes.

Trailblazing Signs, in this context, are community destination signs or other directional guide signs that direct subsequent turns on local streets to reach a destination.

### **PART 3 – GENERAL PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

#### **DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (hereinafter referred to as Department) has the primary responsibility to develop, maintain, and operate a state trunk highway system designed to move traffic from one destination to another in a safe, efficient, and expeditious manner. Erecting and maintaining highway traffic signs on the state highway system is a part of this responsibility.

Standards for the design and application of all highway traffic signs erected on public highways are specified in the Wisconsin Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (WMUTCD) which, in turn, is required by statute to conform with national standards on highway signing. Refer to SS 84.02(4)(e) and (f), SS 84.60(1)(a) and SS 349.065.

Signing under permit is addressed in Chapter Trans 200.03 Wisconsin Administrative Code. Specific Information Signing (Logo), authorized pursuant to SS. 86.195, is addressed in Chapter Trans 200.06, Wisconsin Administrative Code.

The basic supposition of supplemental signing is that the facility or institution as a class is of interest and concern to a sufficient number of motorists to warrant special directional signing. It is also a basic assumption that the purpose of this signing is guidance and not advertising.

It is the purpose of these guidelines to describe all types of facilities and institutions for which signs *may* be erected on State Highway right-of-way by state forces or under contract to the state. Conversely signs will not be permitted for any type of facility or institution not addressed herein.

#### **NEED FOR SIGNING POLICY**

The Highway Beautification Act of 1965, public law 89-285, placed severe restrictions on billboard advertising. Governor Lee S. Dreyfus issued an administrative order in 1981, requiring the Department to permit supplemental guide signs, directing to the University of Wisconsin campuses. Ever since, there has been a substantial demand on the Department to permit additional directional signs on highway rights-of-way. In order to respond to all sign requests in a fair and consistent manner, the Department recognized the need to establish a signing policy that addressed all aspects of highway signing while maintaining a safe and logical sequence of informational displays in the highway environment. This document supersedes all previous policy guidance on supplemental signing for public and private facilities.

Although the WMUTCD contains standards for design and application of traffic control devices, it does not contain specific criteria on the following subjects:

- (1) allowable sign messages,
- (2) qualifications which permit placement of highway signs for various facilities and/or activities, or
- (3) priority (ranking) of the various sign groups on the basis of highway user needs which, in turn, *should* determine the selection process for sign installations.

These guidelines provide criteria by which to evaluate all highway signing requests in an equitable manner without penalizing the greater majority of highway users.

### HUMAN FACTORS

As vehicles move along a highway, each driver is confronted with many elements; the presence of other vehicles and pedestrians, roadway alignment and other design features, roadside signs and other obstacles, commercial development, wildlife, and adverse weather conditions. Any or all of these factors *may* affect highway safety, as well as the driver's ability to observe, assimilate, and react to pertinent highway sign messages.

Studies of human behavior have shown that a driver can focus attention on only one thing at a time, but he can respond very rapidly to several stimuli. However, receiving too much information in a short time can adversely affect the driver's ability to process information effectively, causing what is known as information overload. Information overload is a condition in which the driver is unable to perceive and/or use the information displayed. When this condition occurs, the driver will shift attention from one source of information to another and *may* overlook important sign messages.

Considering the large number of highway elements confronting each driver, it is apparent that the amount of information which can be effectively conveyed by traffic signs, is limited. Therefore, a system for avoiding information overload must be established.

### MUTCD REFERENCES

As a general background, several pertinent paragraphs from the MUTCD, as adopted by Wisconsin, are enumerated below.

#### **Section 1A.01 Purpose of Traffic Control Devices**

Support:

The purpose of traffic control devices, as well as the principles for their use, is to promote highway safety and efficiency by providing for the orderly movement of all road users on streets and highways throughout the Nation.

Traffic control devices notify road users of regulations and provide warning and guidance needed for the reasonably safe, uniform, and efficient operation of all elements of the traffic stream.

**Standard:**

**Traffic control devices or their supports shall not bear any advertising message or any other message that is not related to traffic control.**

Support:

Tourist-oriented directional signs and Specific Service signs are not considered advertising; rather, they are classified as motorist service signs.

#### **Section 1A.02 Principles of Traffic Control Devices**

Support:

This Manual contains the basic principles that govern the design and use of traffic control devices for all streets and highways open to public travel regardless of type or class or the public agency having jurisdiction. This Manual's text specifies the restriction on the use of a device if it is intended for limited application or for a specific system. It is important that these principles be given primary consideration in the selection and application of each device.

Guidance:

To be effective, a traffic control device *should* meet five basic requirements:

- A. Fulfill a need;
- B. Command attention;
- C. Convey a clear, simple meaning;
- D. Command respect from road users; and
- E. Give adequate time for proper response.

### **Section 2D.02 Application**

Support:

Guide signs are essential to direct road users along streets and highways, to inform them of intersecting routes, to direct them to cities, towns, villages, or other important destinations, to identify nearby rivers and streams, parks, forests, and historical sites, and generally to give such information as will help them along their way in the most simple, direct manner possible.

### **Section 2D.03 Color, Retroreflection and Illumination**

**Standard**

**Except where otherwise specified herein for individual groups of signs, guide signs on streets and highways shall have a white message and border on a green background. All messages, borders, and legends shall be retroreflective and all backgrounds shall be retroreflective or illuminated.**

**Historic downtown, State and National Historic Sites and Historical Marker signs shall have a white retroreflective message and border on a brown retroreflective background.**

### **Section 2D.07 Amount of Legend**

Support:

The longer the legend on a guide sign, the longer it will take road users to comprehend it, regardless of letter size.

Guidance:

Guide signs *should* be limited to three lines of principal legend. Where two or more signs are included in the same overhead display, the amount of legend *should* be minimized. The principal legend *should* include only place names, route numbers, and street names.

Option:

Symbols, action information, cardinal directions, and exit numbers *may* be used in addition to the principal legend where sign space is available.

### **Section 2E.02 Freeway and Expressway Signing Principles**

Support:

The development of a signing system for freeways and expressways is approached on the premise that the signing is primarily for the benefit and direction of road users who are not familiar with the route or area. The signing furnishes road users with clear instructions for orderly progress to their destinations.

### **Section 2E.03 General**

Support:

Signs are designed so that they are legible to road users approaching them and readable in time to permit proper responses. Desired design characteristics include: (a) long visibility distances, (b) large lettering and symbols, and (c) short legends for quick comprehension.

**Standard:**

**Standard shapes and colors shall be used so that traffic signs can be promptly recognized by road users.**

(End of MUTCD references)

### SIGNING PRIORITIES

Basic concepts of traffic engineering recognize that the primary function of traffic control signs is to warn, regulate, and guide traffic. Sign spacing and the amount of information displayed have an impact on the driver's ability to read and respond to sign messages in an expected, predictable manner.

Accordingly, traffic control signs on the highway are primarily intended to enable drivers to react promptly, naturally, and properly to the traffic and design conditions encountered; to advise of the regulations and use of streets and highways; to warn of potential roadway hazards; and to provide guidance to major destinations.

Secondary functions of traffic control signs are to advise drivers of various services normally required to complete an extended journey (emergency services, motorist services, public transportation), and of supplemental services, such as recreational facilities or points of interest.

Traffic control signs can be classified into eight basic sign groups. Following is the order of priorities for these sign groups, and a brief description of their specific function, as adopted by the national committees of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and the Institute of Transportation Engineers.

1. Regulatory Signs - Advise the driver of traffic laws or regulations concerning vehicle operation on the highway.
2. Warning Signs - Advise the driver of unexpected highway conditions which require extra care in driving.
3. Navigational Guide Signs - Identify the route, or routes, that the driver *should* follow to complete a trip. Navigational guide signs indicate directions and distances to cities and to other destinations or regions.
4. Emergency Services Signs - Advise of and direct the driver to facilities providing emergency medical service or assistance. Such facilities include state enforcement agencies and hospitals providing outpatient emergency medical treatment.
5. Motorist Services Signs - Advise of and direct the driver to basic services normally needed to complete a long trip (motor fuel, food, lodging, camping, tourist information centers, and rest areas).
6. Public Transportation Signs - Advise of and direct the driver to facilities providing commercial passenger travel service (airports, park and ride lots, rail passenger stations).
7. Traffic Generator Signs - Advise of and direct the driver to activities, facilities, or special points of interest which attract large numbers of people, a majority of whom are unfamiliar with the local area and/or access routes.
8. General Information Signs - Advise the driver of information that *may* be of interest, though not necessary for travel (municipal boundaries, landmarks).

Signing needs to be evaluated and signs installed in descending order of the priorities indicated as long as adequate space between signs is maintained, thus avoiding information overload and confusion to the driver.

It *may* be necessary to prioritize sign requests. An example of this situation would be where there are more qualifying traffic generators than can be accommodated under the established guidelines. In these circumstances, the several qualifying generators will be ranked according to which generator exceeds, by the greater percentage, the minimum criterion for signing. Those exceeding the warrants by the greatest percentage will be given priority. Where specific criteria are not applicable, those traffic generators closest to the intersection where signing is requested **shall** determine the priority for signing.

#### **PART 4 - FREEWAY & EXPRESSWAY GUIDE SIGNING** **GENERAL POLICY CRITERIA & RESTRICTIONS**

Guide signing can be divided into two basic categories: primary and supplemental. Each category is subject to various practical requirements.

Primary signing includes standard interchange and intersection signing, destination signs, distance signs, required motorist services signs, plus regulatory, warning, and route marker signs. This type of signing always takes precedence in the signing scheme of any intersection or interchange because it is directly related to the primary purpose of the intersection or interchange.

Supplemental freeway signing includes signing to places of lesser importance. Signing for traffic generators is considered secondary to primary signing needs. Highway signing is not intended for the purpose of advertising or promoting the facility, but to direct and guide traffic seeking that facility.

As stated in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices Section 2E-32:

Support:

Supplemental Guide signs can be used to provide information regarding destinations accessible from an interchange, other than places shown on the standard interchange signing. However, such Supplemental Guide signing can reduce the effectiveness of other more important guide signing because of the possibility of overloading the road user's capacity to receive visual messages and make appropriate decisions.

Guidance:

No more than one Supplemental Guide sign *should* be used on each interchange approach.

A Supplemental Guide sign (see Figure 2E-17) *should not* list more than two destinations. Destination names *should* be followed by the interchange number (and suffix), or if interchanges are not numbered, by the legend NEXT RIGHT or SECOND RIGHT or both, as appropriate. The Supplemental Guide sign *should* be installed as an independent guide sign assembly.

Where two or more Advance Guide signs are used, the Supplemental Guide sign *should* be installed approximately midway between two of the Advance Guide signs. If only one Advance Guide sign is used, the Supplemental Guide sign *should* follow it by at least 245 m (800 feet). If the interchanges are numbered, the interchange number *should* be used for the action message.

States and other agencies *should* adopt an appropriate policy for installing supplemental signs using “The AASHTO Guidelines for the Selection of Supplemental Guide Signs for Traffic Generators Adjacent to Freeways.” In developing policies for such signing, such items as population, amount of traffic generated, distance from the route, and the significance of the destination *should* be taken into account.

**Standard:**

**Guide signs directing drivers to park and ride facilities shall be considered as Supplemental Guide signs (see Figures 2E-18 and 2E-19).**

(End of MUTCD reference)

Placement of supplemental guide signs for a traffic generator **shall** be limited to the nearest freeway or expressway. Signing which would require a motorist to travel on the crossroad beyond another state highway and/or through a community **shall not** be permitted.

Supplemental signs **shall not** be permitted in advance of a system interchange connecting two freeways in which all legs or roadways are declared freeways.

The minimum spacing between guide signs *should not* be less than 800 feet on freeways and expressways (see Figure 1 on page 15). Actual sign installation will depend on whether there is sufficient longitudinal space to accommodate the new sign installation without violating the minimum allowable 800 feet spacing between signs.

Along a freeway, only one supplemental guide sign **shall** be permitted in each direction of travel for a traffic generator. Signs for generators are to be located in advance of the interchanging roadway that provides the most direct and best route to the facility. In determining the most direct and best route, the Department will consider all relevant conditions including directness of route, speed of travel, length of travel, and ease of locating the facility.

Information relating to more than two traffic generators **shall not** be displayed on supplemental guide signs in advance of an interchange. Both traffic generators **shall** be shown on a single supplemental guide sign installation except where a traffic generator message is included as part of a major guide sign destination. The traffic generator message on the major guide sign **shall** count as one of the two acceptable signs, but an additional sign installation *may* be allowed in such cases.

In the event that there are more than two qualifying facilities, the two facilities that generate the greatest need for providing directional information to motorists **shall** have signs displayed. In determining which signs are most necessary, the Department will consider such factors as the amount of traffic generated, distance from the freeway exit, and ease of locating the facility. If a quantitative comparison is needed, the Principal Destination formula in TGM 2-15-5 *may* be used, substituting comparable attendance or enrollment figures for the population.

**TABLE 1**  
**GENERAL QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR SIGNING TRAFFIC GENERATORS ON FREEWAYS OR EXPRESSWAYS**

TYPE OF GENERATOR	SPECIFIC CRITERIA	POPULATION OF METROPOLITAN AREA		
		Major <sup>1</sup> OVER 500,000	Urban 50,000-500,000	Rural Under 50,000
Colleges, Universities, Vocational, Technical & Adult Education Colleges	Minimum Campus Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	2,500	1,000	1,000
	Maximum Distance From Interchange (mi.)	2	8	12
Multipurpose Arenas, Auditoriums, Fairgrounds, Museums, Race Tracks, Stadiums, & Zoos.	Minimum Annual Attendance	300,000	200,000	100,000
	Minimum No. of Seats (If Applicable)	6,000	5,000	4,000
	Maximum Distance from Interchange (mi)	2	5	7

<sup>1</sup> Major Metropolitan Area is defined as within Milwaukee County.

<sup>2</sup> Campus enrollment is defined as the total number of full and part-time students that physically attend classes on the specific campus site.

Information relating to traffic generators **shall not** be displayed on a supplemental guide sign until signing has been installed along the interchanging and/or intersecting minor roads to adequately direct the motorist from the freeway exit or intersecting road to the facility. (See SUBSEQUENT TRAILBLAZING SIGNING in **PART 5**.)

For additional specific criteria, see **PART 6** and **PART 7**.

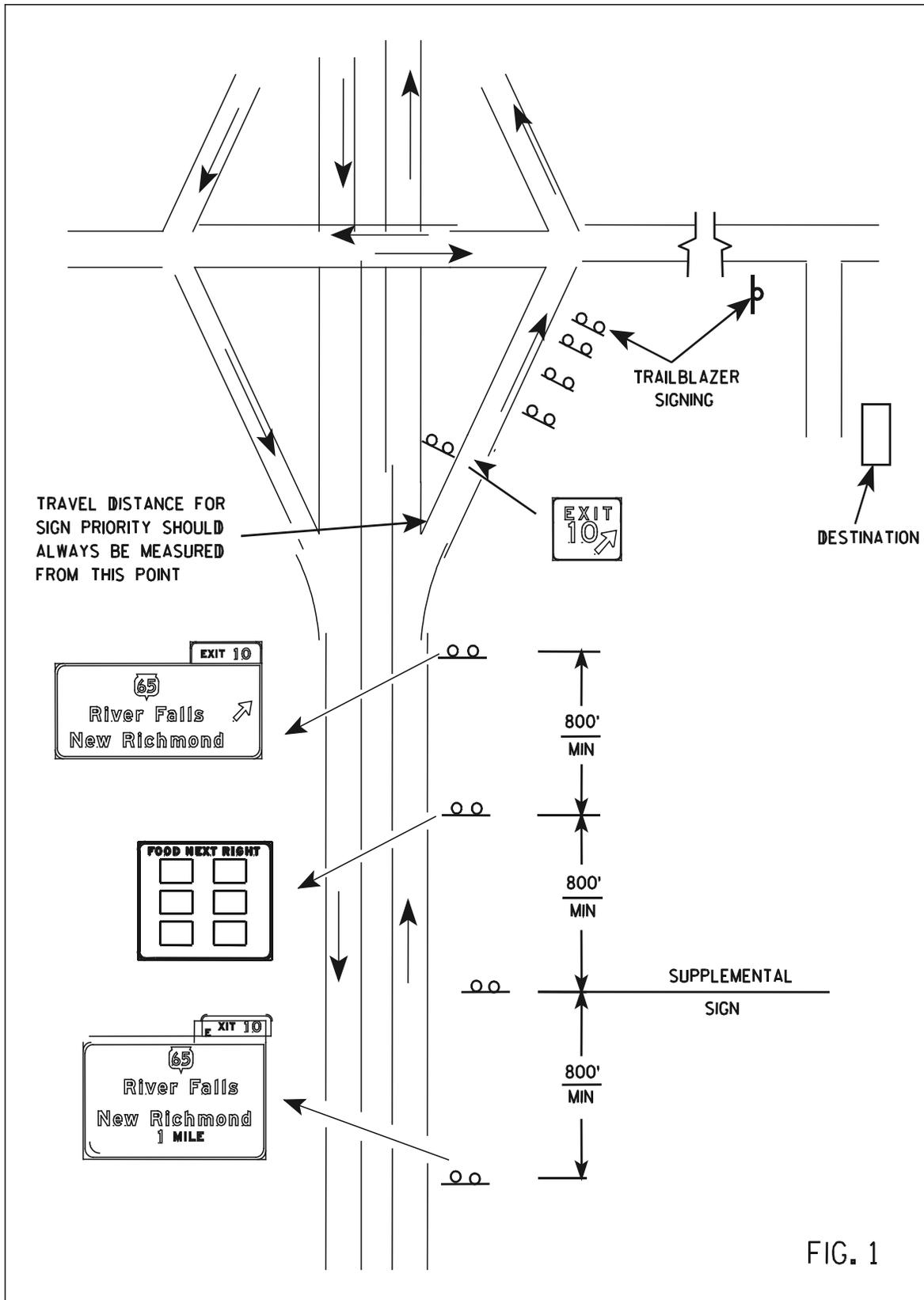


FIG. 1

**PART 5 - CONVENTIONAL HIGHWAY GUIDE SIGNING**  
**GENERAL POLICY CRITERIA & RESTRICTIONS**

1. All specific WisMUTCD requirements must be met in all situations.
2. Location and placement of all signing is dependent upon the availability of longitudinal spacing (200 feet desirable, 100 feet minimum) with respect to existing traffic control devices.
3. A significant portion of the traffic volume generated by the facility must be drivers who are unfamiliar with the local area and/or access routes to the facility. The adverse effects on highway operations created by motorists seeking a facility without guide signing will also be taken into consideration.
4. In designing signs and selecting locations for sign installation on State Highways, the Department retains the authority to specify message content (including abbreviations), size of sign, sign location, and combination of message, in accordance with standards for acceptable signing practice. The Department also retains the authority to deny requests for signing where it deems acceptable standards cannot be met, including locations where other supplemental signs are already in place.
5. Signing for a specific traffic generator:
  - a) **shall** be limited to a maximum of 4 signs on State Trunk Highways.
  - b) **shall** be installed only at an intersection that gives the best, most direct access to the traffic generator.
  - c) **shall not** be installed at more than one intersection for each direction of traffic on a State Trunk Highway, but not necessarily at the same intersection for both directions.
6. Signing will normally not be permitted if the establishment is readily visible from the State Trunk Highway.
7. An on-premise sign identifying the facility is required. A sign *may* be installed on the highway fronting a facility if the on-premise sign is not feasible due to terrain-related visibility.
8. Supplemental signs and/or trailblazing signs **shall not** be permitted at an intersection from one State Highway to another State Highway.
9. Placement of supplemental guide signs for a traffic generator **shall** be limited to the nearest state highway. Signing which would require a motorist to travel on the crossroad beyond another state highway and/or through a community **shall not** be permitted.
10. Facilities must be open a minimum of five days a week, during normal business hours.
11. The traffic generator must be located within the distance noted in TABLE 2 from the highway intersection at which signing is requested, unless a different distance is noted in other specific criteria.
12. Signing for a seasonal generator **shall** be covered, removed, or overlaid with a "CLOSED" plaque during the off-season.
13. When two or more qualifying facilities are affiliated with the same agency or institution and share a common access, only one specific name will be permitted on the sign to identify the conglomerate.

14. A facility *may*, at any time, request that a sign erected under these guidelines be removed and the Department will arrange for its removal.

**TABLE 2**  
**GENERAL QUALIFYING CRITERIA FOR SIGNING TRAFFIC GENERATORS ON CONVENTIONAL HIGHWAYS**

TYPE OF GENERATOR	SPECIFIC CRITERIA	POPULATION OF METROPOLITAN AREA			
		Major <sup>1</sup> Over 500,000	Urban 50,000 – 500,000	Urban 20,000 – 50,000	Rural Under 20,000
Colleges, Universities, Vocational, Technical & Adult Education Colleges	Minimum Campus Enrollment <sup>2</sup>	2,500	750	500	500
	Maximum Distance from Intersection (mi.)	2	8	12	15 <sup>3</sup>
All Other Traffic Generators	Minimum Annual Attendance	150,000	100,000	50,000	20,000
	Minimum No. of Seats (if applicable)	3,000	2,500	2,000	2,000
	Maximum Distance from Intersection (mi.)	2	7	10	15 <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Major Metropolitan Area is defined as within Milwaukee County.

<sup>2</sup> Campus enrollment is defined as the total number of full and part-time students that physically attend classes on the specific campus site.

<sup>3</sup>The distance designated, or half the distance to the next parallel State Trunk Highway, whichever is greater.

#### SUBSEQUENT TRAILBLAZING SIGNING

Appropriate local road signing to guide motorists to a facility which will be signed from a State Highway or freeway is the responsibility of the facility and the local road authority.

Information relating to traffic generators **shall not** be displayed on a supplemental guide sign until signing has been installed along the interchanging and/or intersecting minor road and other roads to adequately direct the motorist from the freeway exit or intersecting road to the facility. In determining whether there is adequate signing to direct the motorist from the State Highway to the facility, the Department will consider such factors as the directness of the route, the distance involved, and the environment in which the signs are installed.

These signs, used only on non-freeways, are to be placed at sufficiently frequent intervals to adequately guide and reassure motorists. A trailblazing sign with the appropriate arrow **shall** be placed in advance of each intersection where the route changes from one highway to another or where there *may* be confusion as to the direction, which the route takes.

The Department *may* issue a written permit for trailblazing signing on a conventional State Highway to a qualifying traffic generator, which has been signed from a freeway or expressway exit ramp. Subsequent trailblazing signing **shall not** be erected on a State Trunk Highway without such written authority.

Supplemental signs and/or trailblazing signs **shall not** be permitted through a system interchange from one freeway to another or at an intersection from one conventional State Highway to another conventional State Highway.

For more specific criteria, see **PART 6** and **PART 8**.

## **PART 6 – CATEGORIES & SPECIFIC CRITERIA**

The following are categories and relevant information regarding directional and informational signs permitted on the state trunk highway system. References are made to authorization in the statutes, administrative rules, MUTCD, and other subjects in the TGM. For each type of sign listed in Part 1 of this subject there is a category below, and/or a TGM reference, or a notice that the sign is not permitted.

### **Community Destination (Wayfinder) Signs**

These signs are installed, owned and maintained by the community. They direct to area destinations such as Downtown, or Historic District, and individual destinations such as City Hall, Convention Center, museums, and local parks. The individual destinations are generally publicly owned and operated for public use or privately owned non-profit and open to the public. Complete guidance is in TGM 2-15-6.

### **Government Service Centers**

State agencies *may* request signs to be installed on state trunk highways to direct traffic to certain service centers. This policy pertains only to state agencies. Local agencies are not included since local agencies generally serve local traffic and the need is not as significant.

Signs *may* be permitted on a state highway only when the service center is not located directly on the state highway system; signs will not be permitted on the state highway system when extensive trail blazing would be required or when guidance *may* be reasonably provided to the service center using street names and addresses.

No signs will be permitted on freeways or expressways.

Signs *may* be allowed at only two intersections of the state trunk highway system with county or local roads for any service center or complex of service centers.

Sign messages must be approved by the department and signs *may* only be installed under the direction of the department.

Service centers are those governmental offices whose primary purpose is to provide direct customer service to the public. Service centers do not include those offices that are predominantly administrative or serving internal agency operations. The extent of external customer traffic will be considered in determining eligibility for service center signs.

The service center requesting the sign is responsible for all costs related to those signs which are incurred by the department.

This guidance is premised on the view that only a select number of locations will qualify for signs. *Should* the number of signs allowed under this guidance adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the state highway system, signs *may* be further restricted.

## Government Transportation Facilities

Guide signs are Department funded and installed on freeways and conventional highways.

### Major Airport

- The facility must provide regularly scheduled commercial passenger flights and be located within 15 miles of the freeway or expressway, or within 5 miles of a conventional state trunk highway. Signing to General Mitchell International Airport and Austin Straubel International Airport **shall** be evaluated as a special case.

### Public Airport, General Aviation

- The facility must be classified as a Large General Aviation Airport or Medium General Aviation Airport, as listed in the Wisconsin State Airport System Plan that is published by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics. The General Aviation airport **shall** be located within 15 miles of the freeway or expressway, or within 5 miles of a conventional state trunk highway.

### Park & Ride Lots

- The facility must provide free parking, be approved by the Department, and be located within ½ mile of the state trunk highway.

### Ports and Harbors

- The port or harbor facilities must serve commercial Great Lakes shipping and be located within 10 miles of the freeway or expressway, or within 5 miles of the conventional state trunk highway.

### Amtrak Passenger Stations

- Facility must provide regularly scheduled intercity passenger service, protection for passenger comfort, public parking, and be within 5 miles of the state trunk highway.

### Ferries

- Facility must provide regularly scheduled passenger service, protection for passenger comfort, public parking, and be within 5 miles of the state trunk highway.

## Guidance Signs

Sometimes called arrow boards, guidance signs are only permitted on conventional state highways or expressway approaches to at-grade intersections. As prescribed in the Wisconsin Administrative Code Chapter Trans 200, these narrow horizontal sign panels *may* bear the names of, and direct to:

- resorts,
- hotels,
- places of public entertainment or instruction,
- any place of religious worship,
- county institutions,
- scientific experimental locations for the furtherance of agriculture, science or art.

The term "entertainment" in this case does not include nightclubs, taverns, or similar establishments.

The regions *may* issue a permit; there is no permit fee, and installation **shall** be by the requestor's choice of a WisDOT approved signing contractor or county signing crew. Detailed department guidelines and the permit application Form DT1903 are contained in TGM 2-15-60.

### **Information Signs**

Information signs *may* be permitted or installed by the Department to identify geographic features and/or provide information to the traveling public. Qualifying geographic features are those found on the official state highway map.

The following specific guidelines **shall** be applied to these individual signs.

- City or village population signs limit signs *may* be installed and maintained by the Department in accordance with TGM 2-1-41.
- County Line signs **shall** be installed by the Department on all state highways at or near the county line. No other signs **shall** share the supports.
- Lake, River or Stream signs *may* be installed and maintained by the Department in accordance with TGM 2-4-55.
- Memorial Facilities signs **shall** be installed and maintained by the Department in accordance with Chapter 84 of the State Statutes.
- NEXT (n) EXITS signs *may* be installed and maintained on freeways by the Department, upon request by an incorporated city or village being appropriately served by two or more consecutive exits.
- Street Name Signs *may* be independently installed and maintained on the STH right-of-way by the municipality with jurisdiction over the side road or crossroad.
- Unincorporated Community signs *may* be installed and maintained by the Department in accordance with TGM 2-4-48.
- Advance Crossroad Name signs *may* be installed and maintained by the Department in accordance with TGM 2-4-50.

### **Inter-Agency Facilities**

Signs *may* be permitted on the basis of agreements with other state, federal and county agencies, such as the State and County Historical Societies, the Department of Natural Resources, and Department of Tourism. In most cases, the Department of Transportation will arrange for sign installation and maintenance, and request reimbursement. Agreements and permits are subject to the Department's evaluation and approval based on the following specific requirements.

#### **Boat Landings; Public Access to Lakes & Rivers**

Conventional Highways only.

No attendance criteria.

A sign **shall not** be permitted unless the access point is located on a road that is sufficiently improved so that a passenger car can use the road without being scratched, dented, or otherwise damaged.

Additional Criteria:

- Maximum distance from State Trunk Highway intersection – 2 miles.

- Parking provided at access site.
- Gravel surface (or better) at access site.
- Improved boat-launching ramp.

All requests for signs directing to Department of Natural Resources public access sites **shall** be approved by the DNR. This also applies to sites which are public DNR-owned, but maintained by a local jurisdiction, i.e., city, county, etc.

### **Campgrounds, Public**

Conventional highways only.

No attendance criteria.

Signing *may* be permitted on conventional highways only, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

Additional criteria:

- Public-owned and operated campgrounds *may* be signed if they have a minimum of 50 campsites, adequate toilet facilities, and safe drinking water.
- Only requests from the public agency owning the campground **shall** be considered.
- Campgrounds that are part of a National, State, County or local park **shall not** be signed separately, but signing *may* be considered for the park.

Privately-owned camping facilities *may* qualify for signing under the Specific Information Sign (SIS), Tourist-Oriented Directional Sign (TODS), or Trans 200 Guidance Sign programs.

### **Conservation or Environmental Centers**

Supplemental signing *may* be permitted on conventional highways, subject to the general criteria applicable to each facility and location and the following additional criteria:

- Provide on-site, off-street parking for minimum 50 vehicles.
- Provide educational programs and/or audio/visual presentations.

Centers that are part of a National, State, County, or local park or forest **shall not** be signed separately, but signing *may* be considered for the park or forest headquarters entrance.

### **Corps of Engineers Facilities** (such as Lock and Dam sites)

Conventional highways only.

No attendance criteria.

Signing *may* be permitted on conventional highways only, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

Additional criteria:

- Must provide picnic and park facilities.
- Must provide viewing provisions for the public.
- Must provide parking for 25 vehicles or more.

### **Fairgrounds, State and County**

Supplemental signing *may* be permitted on freeways or conventional highways, subject to all the general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

### **Fish Hatcheries**

Conventional highways only.

No attendance criteria

Signing *may* be permitted on conventional highways only, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

Additional criteria:

- Must be State-owned facilities
- Must provide visitor accommodations.

### **Forest Headquarters**

No attendance criteria

Supplemental signing *may* be permitted on freeways or conventional highways, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

Additional criteria:

- Provide on-site, off-street parking for minimum 50 vehicles.
- Provide educational programs and/or audio/visual presentations.

Only requests from the public agency managing the forest **shall** be considered.

### **Historic Sites**

Conventional highways only.

No attendance criteria

Signs on freeways or conventional highways *may* be permitted for State historical sites operated by the Wisconsin Historical Society, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

### **Institutions, County** (Publicly-owned nursing homes)

Conventional highways only.

No attendance criteria.

Signing *may* be permitted on conventional highways only, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

### **Marinas** (Publicly-owned)

Signs on freeways or conventional highways *may* be permitted for marinas, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

Additional criteria:

- To qualify for freeway signs, the marina **shall** have a minimum of 500 boat slips.
- To qualify for conventional highway signs, the marina **shall** have a minimum of 125 boat slips.

### **Military Bases, Major**

Signs *may* be permitted to Fort McCoy, Volk Field, and Camp Williams.

### **National Historic Landmarks**

Signs *may* be permitted for freeways, expressways and conventional highways, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

Additional criteria:

- The site shall be a documented national historic landmark that is officially on the listing for National Historic Landmarks in Wisconsin designated by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior. [www.nps.gov/nhl/find/statelists/wi/WI.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/nhl/find/statelists/wi/WI.pdf) Only historical sites are eligible, not individual buildings. A historical site is comprised as a complex of buildings or an entire district that is a documented National Historic Landmark.

### **Parks, National, State, and County Freeway**

Supplemental signing *may* be permitted, subject to the general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

No annual attendance criteria.

Signing *may* be erected for state parks which the Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources mutually agree upon. The following **shall** be provided as a

minimum: off-highway parking, safe drinking water, toilet facilities, 50 camping sites, swimming, and handicapped accessible camping and picnic areas. State parks **shall** also offer other special attractions, such as skiing, nature trails, improved hiking trails, interpretive centers, vistas and overlooks, or be of statewide historical significance.

### **Conventional Highway**

Supplemental signing *may* be permitted, subject to the general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

No annual attendance criteria.

Signing *may* be erected for state parks which the Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources mutually agree upon. The following **shall** be provided as a minimum: off-highway parking, safe drinking water, toilet facilities, and handicapped accessible picnic areas. State parks *should* also offer other special attractions, such as camping, swimming, skiing, nature trails, improved hiking trails, interpretive centers, vistas and overlooks, or be of statewide historical significance.

Signs directing to National, County and local parks *may* be permitted on freeways or conventional highways if the criteria applicable to state parks are satisfied and the ownership agency and operating authority has requested the signing.

### **Prisons, Federal/State**

Conventional highways only.

No attendance criteria.

Signing *may* be permitted on conventional highways only, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

### **Sheriff Freeway Substations**

Signs on freeways may be permitted for County Sheriff Freeway Substations.

County sheriff's office shall have unique statutory authority for patrolling the freeway system to qualify for signage. Presently, only Milwaukee County has this statutory authority.

### **Ski Areas, Downhill**

No attendance criteria.

Signs on freeways or conventional highways *may* be permitted for downhill ski areas, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

### **Travel Information, State**

No attendance or usage criteria.

Subject to other general criteria, State travel information stations *may* be signed under mutual agreement between the Department of Transportation and the Department of Tourism. As a minimum the locations **shall** provide parking facilities, and public restrooms.

### **Veterans Centers/Facilities**

No attendance or usage criteria.

Signs on freeways or conventional highways *may* be permitted for Veterans Centers with Hospitals providing major medical or out-patient services, subject to all other general criteria applicable to each facility and location.

### **Intra-Agency**

Signs are permitted under agreements with other divisions in the Department of Transportation, such as DMV and DSP. No reimbursement is required.

**Special**

This category addresses these specific types of signs which are described in other parts of the TGM or in other policies.

**Downtown:** The Department permits Downtown sign(s) at strategic freeway or expressway exits(s) into the city in accordance with TGM 2-6-50.

**Historic Downtown/District:** The Department permits Historic Downtown or Historic District sign(s) at strategic freeway or expressway exits(s) into the city in accordance with TGM 2-6-55.

**Business District:** As an alternative to Downtown, the Department permits Business District signs on conventional highways at main street intersections.

**Emergency Medical:** Standard Hospital or Emergency Medical Services signs are installed by the Department on state trunk highways to direct to facilities which meet the qualifying criteria in TGM 2-4-45.1 and 2-4-45.2.

**Unincorporated Communities:** The Department *may* install signs directing to unincorporated communities in accordance with TGM 2-4-48.

**Engine Braking:** DOT standard signs are permitted on conventional highway entrances to communities in accordance with TGM 2-2-30.

**Events, Special:** The Department *may* permit signs directing to special events in accordance with TGM 2-15-25.

**Heritage Tourism:** Program has been discontinued as of 12/1/13 in accordance with TGM 2-4-52.

**Neighborhood Watch:** Approved signs are permitted within cities and villages under State Statute 66.0429(2). Further guidance is provided in TGM 2-4-45.3

**Parking Restrictions:** No-Parking Zones and seasonal or overnight parking restrictions *may* be signed by the Department or cities and villages in accordance with State Statute 349.13. Sign messages *should not* attempt to detail complex parking ordinances. Further guidance is provided in Wisconsin MUTCD Section 2B.41 and TGM 2-2-41.

**Miscellaneous Non-permitted:**

Some municipalities desire various non-standard, promotional signs. Examples include, but are not limited to, Crime Stoppers, Dare Community, Main Street USA, Tree City, Community Recycling, Service Clubs, Welcome to \_\_, and Home of the \_\_.

Such signs **shall not** be permitted on the State Highway right-of-way under DOT jurisdiction. They *may* be displayed at or outside the right-of-way line.

### **Specific Information Signs (SIS)**

References: State Statute 86.195, and Administrative Code Trans 200.06. Specific Information Signs are only allowed on the highway segments listed in this statute.

Business signs are separately attached rectangular plates which show the brand, symbol, trademark, name or combinations of these for motorist services accessible from an approaching interchange or intersection. They are commonly called “logos” and are confined to five categories; fuel, meals, lodging, camping and attractions.

Specific Information Signs are technically the blue rectangular sign panel on which the Business signs are mounted, along with directional information.

Interstate Logos-Wisconsin is under contract to administer this signing program for the Department. The contractor verifies the qualifications, and installs and maintains all signs. Application and annual fees are charged.

All inquiries, including damage reports, *may* be referred to Jordan VanGeffen at 1(844)496-9163 or visit the website.

### **Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs (TODS)**

References: State Statute 86.196, and Administrative Code Trans 200.08.

These signs are blue panels in rural areas (outside urban area boundaries) on conventional state highways that are not under the SIS Sign Program. Businesses which make all or most of their sales to visitors or tourists *may* be eligible. Applications, installation and maintenance *should* be arranged by the County, subject to the approval of the maintaining authority. Application and renewal fees are charged. These signs are not permitted on the freeway system.

### **PART 7 - SPECIFIC POLICY FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SIGNS ON FREEWAYS & EXPRESSWAYS**

The document, *Guidelines for the Selection of Supplemental Guide Signs for Traffic Generators Adjacent to Freeways*, published in 2001 by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, has been used as the basis for WisDOT policy in order to be in substantial conformance with the national standards, required by Federal and State law. This AASHTO document is reprinted with permission in TGM 2-15-1.1.

Supplemental guide signs, directing to municipalities, *may* be permitted, upon request, as provided for in ss. 86.19(6), but subject to the other general policy criteria & restrictions in PART 4. Qualifying municipalities **shall** be incorporated cities or villages shown on the official State Highway map and **shall** be within 5 miles of the freeway exit. The municipality **shall** be billed for all costs of fabrication, installation, maintenance and removal. The Department **shall** specify the sign design and *may* arrange for fabrication, installation, maintenance and/or removal.

Signing for a municipality or traffic generator *should not* be displayed on a supplemental guide sign until signing has been installed at the ramp terminals and along the interchanging road and other roads as necessary to direct the motorist from the freeway exit to the municipality or traffic generator.

Signing for a seasonal generator *may* be displayed when warranted. Such signing **shall** be removed, covered, overlaid with a "CLOSED" plaque, or fitted with a "CLOSED" flip-panel during the off-season.

The cost of signs erected under this section of the guidelines, **shall** be segregated from other signs in order to properly invoice the municipality or facility to cover the cost of installation and maintenance of these signs. The cost of the installation **shall** include the cost of the signs, posts, mounting hardware, labor, vehicles and miscellaneous materials.

Sign installation and cost reimbursement methods are in **PART 9** on page 31.

If only one municipality or facility makes a request but others could qualify later, the initial facility will be invoiced for the total initial installation cost. The subsequent facility will be invoiced only for the additions to the existing installation. The facilities *may* agree between themselves to share the costs in a different manner, but no such agreement **shall** involve the Department. (For example: The first facility *may* request the second to reimburse it for a portion of the post cost.)

Maintenance costs associated with these signs **shall** be shared equally by all destinations on the installation. Maintenance includes replacement of the signs when they wear out and the cost of repairing the signs in the case of damage, when that cost is not recovered from the person causing the damage.

A facility or municipality *may*, at any time, request that a sign erected under these guidelines be removed and the Department will arrange for its removal.

If a facility or municipality fails to pay any invoice within six months of billing, the Department will remove the sign.

NOTE: The signing permit and request form is **Figure 2**, found on page 33 at the end of this policy document.

#### IN-PLACE SIGNING

(1) Conforming to Policy: Signs which are in place and meet all established provisions of this policy *may* remain in place until they have reached the end of their useful life, or are rendered useless by damage or vandalism. If desired, the sign(s) will be replaced, and the facility served by the sign **shall** pay the full cost of replacement.

Before replacing a sign when it wears out or is damaged, the Department will evaluate other requests for signing at the same location, selecting the request with the greatest priority among the requests. If there are no other requests, the Department will contact each facility on the sign to determine whether or not they wish their name retained and are willing to bear the replacement cost. The Department is not obligated to leave a sign in place after judging it to be worn out, merely because the facility is unwilling to pay for a replacement.

(2) Non-conforming Signs will be allowed to remain until the end of their useful life, or are rendered useless by damage or vandalism, or are removed under a sign replacement or highway reconstruction project. Prior to the removal of any non-conforming signs, the Region **shall** contact the Bureau of Highway Operations to discuss potential political impacts and acceptable signing alternatives.

(3) Sign Replacement Program: Periodically, the Department replaces traffic signs along a complete segment of a highway route, so that all devices are uniformly maintained and proper

retroreflectivity is assured on all signs. When this activity occurs, supplemental guide signing to traffic generators will generally be included in the replacement program, and facilities will be billed for their particular sign costs.

#### MILWAUKEE METROPOLITAN AREA: SPECIFIC POLICY

Because of the numerous and often closely spaced interchanges, the frequency of in-place primary signing, and the adequacy of route and street identification signing already in place, supplemental signing is limited by these additional restrictions:

##### All Supplemental Signing – Downtown Loop

Signing for any specific facility or generator (including educational institutions) **shall not** be permitted on the entire length of I-794, nor on any downtown freeway comprising a loop bounded by McKinley Avenue on the north, I-43 on the west, I-794 on the south and Lincoln Memorial Drive on the east. The only exceptions to these restrictions *may* be: LAKEFRONT, PORT OF MILWAUKEE, DOWNTOWN, or any large area within the loop boundaries which can be meaningful to the visitor and whose area name has broad community support (subject to Department approval). Signing for such large area(s) will be considered on the basis that it is a substitute for other exceptions named herein and in consideration of the other space restrictions cited in this policy. If a substitute is approved, it *may* be funded with Department funds.

##### Medical Facilities

Signing to the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (but not to individual facilities within the Regional Medical Center) will be permitted.

#### PART 8 - SPECIFIC POLICY FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SIGNS ON CONVENTIONAL HIGHWAYS

The basic supposition of supplemental signing is that the facility or institution as a class is of interest and concern to a sufficient number of motorists to warrant special directional signing. It is also a basic assumption that the purpose of this signing is guidance and not advertising.

Supplemental guide signs, directing to municipalities, *may* be permitted, upon request, as provided for in ss. 86.19(6), but subject to the other general policy criteria & restrictions in PART 5. Qualifying municipalities **shall** be incorporated cities or villages shown on the official State Highway map and **shall** be within 5 miles of the state highway intersection. The municipality **shall** be billed for all costs of fabrication, installation, maintenance and removal. The Department **shall** specify the sign design and *may* arrange for fabrication, installation, maintenance and/or removal.

Signing for a municipality or traffic generator *should not* be displayed on a supplemental guide sign until signing has been installed along the intersecting road and other roads as necessary to direct the motorist from the intersection to the municipality or traffic generator.

Signing for a seasonal generator *may* be displayed when warranted. Such signing **shall** be removed, covered, overlaid with a "CLOSED" plaque, or fitted with a "CLOSED" flip-panel during the off-season.

Only one supplemental sign designating traffic generators *may* be erected under this policy on the approach to an intersection, and the maximum number of facilities listed on the sign **shall** be three.

Actual sign installation will depend upon sufficient longitudinal space to accommodate the new sign without violating the minimum spacing between signs.

Signing on connecting highways **shall** be the responsibility of the respective local unit of government having jurisdiction. The provisions of this policy **shall not** be construed to be the policy for the signing on connecting highways.

The cost of signs erected under this section of the guidelines, **shall** be segregated from other signs in order to properly invoice the municipality or facility to cover the cost of installation and maintenance of these signs. The cost of the installation **shall** include the cost of the signs, posts, mounting hardware, labor, vehicles and miscellaneous materials, and *may* be based on average costs for a typical installation.

Sign installation and cost reimbursement methods are in **PART 9** on page 31.

If only one municipality or facility makes a request but others could qualify later, the initial facility will be invoiced for the total initial installation cost. The subsequent facility will be invoiced only for the additions to the existing installation. The facilities *may* agree between themselves to share the costs in a different manner, but no such agreement **shall** involve the Department. (For example: The first facility *may* request the second to reimburse it for a portion of the post cost.)

Maintenance costs associated with those signs **shall** be shared equally by all facilities in the installation. Maintenance includes replacement of the signs when they wear out and the cost of repairing the signs in the case of damage, when that cost is not recovered from the person causing the damage.

NOTE: The signing permit and request form is **Figure 2**, found on page 33 at the end of this policy document.

#### IN-PLACE SIGNING

(1) Conforming to Policy: Signs which are in place and meet all established provisions of this policy *may* remain in place until they have reached the end of their useful life, or are rendered useless by damage or vandalism. If desired, the sign(s) will be replaced, and the facility served by the sign **shall** pay the full cost of replacement.

Before replacing the sign when it wears out, the Department will evaluate other requests for supplemental signing at the same location (if any), selecting the sign with the greatest priority from among the requests prior to contacting a facility with the original sign to determine whether or not they wish the sign replaced and are willing to bear the cost. The Department is not obligated to leave a sign in place after judging it to be worn out merely because the facility is unwilling to pay for a replacement.

(2) Non-conforming Signs will be allowed to remain until the end of their useful life, or are rendered useless by damage or vandalism, or are removed under a sign replacement or highway reconstruction project. Prior to the removal of any non-conforming signs, the Region **shall** contact the Bureau of Highway Operations to discuss potential political impacts and acceptable signing alternatives.

(3) Sign Replacement Program: Periodically, the Department replaces traffic signs along a complete segment of a highway route, so that all devices are uniformly maintained and proper retroreflectivity is assured on all signs. When this activity occurs, supplemental guide signing to traffic generators will generally be included in the replacement program, and facilities will be billed for their particular sign costs.

**PART 9 - METHODS FOR SIGN INSTALLATION AND COST REIMBURSEMENT**

There are several methods that can be utilized by the Regions for the installation and maintenance of signs for Supplemental Traffic Generators. County forces *may* be used for the installation and maintenance of Type II signs. The Statewide open-end signing contractor *should* be used for all Type I signs and *may* be used for Type II signs also. Private individuals or facilities themselves **shall not** be allowed to install signs on WisDOT roadways.

The common methods for accomplishing sign installation are detailed below. The Regions have the opportunity to work within these guidelines and select a method that best fits the Region and/or situation.

**Setting up a Professional and Technical Project ID (P & T ID)**

When cost reimbursement is part of the permit agreement, the Region **shall** set up an individual P & T project ID to track all costs, which would include sign manufacturing, installation (either County or Contractor), subsequent maintenance and/or replacement, and any Region personnel field layout costs associated with the sign request. Under this method, if county crews install the signs, the signs **shall** be furnished by WisDOT. The Region *should* furnish the P & T project ID to the county to charge their time, fleet and material costs. WisDOT staff *should* stake the sign location(s).

If the statewide open-end contractor is utilized, it is expected that the contractor will furnish the signs. WisDOT will provide the sign fabrication detail to the contractor and field stake the location of the sign(s). Charge the P & T project ID for all sign manufacture, for county installation and/or contractor installation costs once invoices are received.

**Permitting the County to Install a Sign Directing to a County Facility**

This method would only be utilized if a county were to request a sign for one of their own facilities off the state trunk highway. WisDOT would permit the county to install the sign(s). If this option were utilized, WisDOT would field stake the sign location and *may* either provide a fabrication detail so the county can get the sign made or manufacture and sell the sign to the county. If WisDOT manufactures the sign for the county, the Region *should* utilize the Sales To Others Form (DT 1668 form). The Region *should* fill out the form and send it to the Central Office Sign Mfg. Shop. The requestor will then be invoiced for the sign manufacture costs. This option would only be used for county facilities.

**Signing For Government, State University Facilities**

For these types of government facilities, the Region *may* elect to have them work directly with the county. If this option were utilized, WisDOT would field stake the sign location and provide a fabrication detail to the requesting agency. The requesting agency would then work directly with the county to get the sign(s) manufactured and installed. The county would direct bill all charges to the requestor.

WisDOT *may* manufacture the sign(s) also. If WisDOT manufactures the sign(s), the Region *should* utilize the Sales To Others Form (DT 1668 form). The Region *should* fill out the form and send it to the Central Office Sign Mfg. Shop. The requestor will then be invoiced for the sign manufacture costs.

**FIGURE 2**

**REQUEST FOR GUIDE SIGN INSTALLATION ON STATE HIGHWAY**

Sign Requested For  College/University  
 Institution  
 Municipality  
 Other - \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Requesting Facility or Municipality		
_____	_____	_____
Street Address	City	Zip Code
Contact Person _____	Phone _____	Email _____

**SIGN MESSAGE or What does the sign direct to?**

**PROPOSED SIGN LOCATIONS**

Hwy. Interchange or Intersection	Town/City/Village	County of	Traffic Direction at Proposed Sign Site  _____ -bound on Hwy. _____
Hwy. Interchange or Intersection	Town/City/Village	County of	Traffic Direction at Proposed Sign Site  _____ -bound on Hwy. _____

Additional requests should be submitted on a separate form.

The requesting facility agrees to and will abide by the conditions contained within the Supplemental Guide Sign Policies and general signing policy provisions attached to this application, which is made by the undersigned official under proper authority to act on behalf of the facility represented above. The requestor agrees to pay for installation costs and costs to replace the signs when they have reached the end of their useful life or repairs if they become damaged, when the cost is not recovered from the person(s) causing the damage.

Signature of Authorized Official	Title	Date
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APPROVED  
 DENIED

\_\_\_\_\_ Regional Traffic Engineer Date