



Traffic Guidelines Manual

ORIGINATOR State Traffic Engineer	2-15-52
CHAPTER 2	Signing
SECTION 15	Comprehensive Policies
SUBJECT 52	Maintenance of Signs and Sign Post Designs

A. Purpose

This policy establishes maintenance responsibility for signs and sign post designs on state trunk highways and crossroads intersecting state maintained highways, either by at-grade intersections or service interchanges. In addition, roundabouts often times add complexity for the responsibility of sign maintenance, especially for local and county roadway approaches. DOT improvement projects often include signs that are installed on county highways and local roads. Because the local unit did not install the signs, there are often questions about the responsibility for maintenance, and many of these signs are left to deteriorate. On several occasions the local unit requests a special type of signpost to be used on state maintained highways through their community. As a result, questions arise as to what type of signposts are acceptable, who would maintain the posts and potential liability issues. Therefore, it is necessary to have clear, consistent guidelines for the maintenance of signing, and designs of signposts, on state maintained highways and at locations of local crossroads intersecting state maintained highways.

B. Sign Maintenance Policy

WisDOT is responsible for maintenance of permanent signs on all state trunk highways. As part of its responsibility, WisDOT *may* contract for services to accomplish the maintenance and *may* require that others fund the costs, for example costs of supplemental traffic generator signs, as approved in TGM 2-15-3.

Should WisDOT allow a local unit of government to erect or maintain any signing, a permit in the form of a letter **shall** be signed by a representative of the local unit of government and the Region's Traffic Supervisor.

In addition, WisDOT is responsible for maintenance of certain other permanent signs on connecting roadways, local streets and business highways described below. It *should* be noted that this policy is not all-inclusive.

Intersecting and Interchanging Roadways (excluding roundabouts)

1. On local public roadways intersecting state maintained highways, WisDOT will maintain the STOP sign and directional assembly (J3 or J13 assembly), adjacent to the STOP sign.
2. On county roadways intersecting state maintained highways, WisDOT will maintain the STOP sign and directional assembly (J3 or J13 assembly), adjacent to the STOP sign.
3. On local and county roadway interchanges with state maintained highways, between the junction assembly (J1 sign) and the ramp, WisDOT will maintain the route markers and destination signs (D1 signs), including the junction assembly.
4. On local and county roadway interchanges with state maintained highways, between ramp to ramp, WisDOT will maintain all signs. An exception to this would be a special agreement with the local unit of government/county or if WisDOT would not have jurisdiction of the intersecting roadway.
5. On state and U.S. highway interchanges with state maintained highways, WisDOT will maintain all the signs.
6. All advanced signing on local and county roads that intersect state maintained highways **shall** be the responsibility of the county/local unit of government to maintain, regardless of who installed it originally.
7. WisDOT will not maintain street name signs at the intersection.
8. For blinker stop signs and blinker stop ahead signs, refer to the separate TGM policy for criteria and permits.

Roundabouts

1. On all roundabouts with at least one WisDOT maintained approach roadway, WisDOT will maintain, at a minimum, the following signs:
 - a. Chevron bank (R6-4b)
 - b. One Way signs (R6-1R and R6-2R)
 - c. Yield signs (R1-2)
 - d. To Traffic From Left Plaque (R1-54)
 - e. Splitter island signs (J-3 or D1 series)
2. On state trunk highway approaches, including interchange ramps, WisDOT will maintain all signs, including overhead sign supports (See Figure 2).

On county and local road approaches, in addition to the Yield sign (R1-2), To Traffic From Left Plaque (R1-54) and One Way sign (R6-2R), WisDOT will also maintain any overhead guide signs that have an Interstate, U.S. or State highway shield on them, including their associated overhead sign support(s) (See Figures 3A and 3B). The county and/or local unit of government would maintain all other signs and

associated sign structures on their approaches, including overhead regulatory lane control signs and the ground mounted map sign (D1-62 sign).

3. For roundabouts on Connecting State Highways, WisDOT will maintain any overhead guide signs that have an Interstate, U.S. or State highway shield on them, including their associated overhead sign support(s). For any overhead guide signs that exclusively contain business route signing, the local unit of government would maintain the sign and associated overhead sign support. WisDOT will also maintain any splitter island signs that have a U.S. or State route shield (J-3 or D1 series) and any U.S. or State reassurance marker (J4 series). All other signs in the roundabout on connecting highways **shall** be maintained by the local unit of government.
4. For roundabouts with county highway and/or local road approaches, it is recommended that early in the design process, a Maintenance Agreement be developed. By having the Maintenance Agreement developed early in the design process, the county or local unit of government will clearly have knowledge of what they are to maintain.

Some particular items that *should* be included in the Maintenance Agreement would include:

- a. Specific signs that WisDOT would maintain and what the locals/county would maintain. This would also include signposts.
- b. Specific overhead sign supports (if any), that WisDOT would maintain and what the locals would maintain.
- c. Recommended inspection frequencies for overhead sign supports that the locals would maintain.

Connecting Highways and Local Streets

1. On connecting highways WisDOT maintains only route markers and trailblazer assemblies, including overhead guide signs that contain interstate, U.S. and State route shields and their associated overhead sign supports or sign bridges. For any overhead guide signs that exclusively contain business route signing, the local unit of government would maintain the sign and associated overhead sign support.
2. On local streets, upon coordination with the local unit of government, WisDOT would maintain only those trailblazer assemblies that are installed and/or approved by WisDOT.

Business Route Signing

1. For business routes located on state maintained highways, WisDOT will install and maintain all route markers.
2. When business routes of state highways are marked over county highways, local streets or highways, WisDOT *may* initially install route markers, but will not be responsible for their maintenance. The installation and maintenance of all other signs **shall** be the responsibility of the local unit of government.

3. Expanded guidance on the usage of business route signing is included in TGM 2-4-19.1.

C. Sign Post Design Policy on State Maintained Roadways

1. On state maintained roadways, 4"x6" wood posts and 2"x2" square steel posts are typically used for sign posts. Municipalities *may* be allowed to install signs on customized posts. The municipality **shall** pay for the cost of the customized posts.
2. Any customized posts allowed **shall** be NCHRP 350 or MASH crash compliant. The municipality **shall** provide WisDOT a copy of the certification letter from the Federal Highway Administration.
3. A permit for non-standard sign supports **shall** be filled out by the municipality and signed by the City/Village Engineer or Director of Public Works or Official Governmental Representative and, upon approval, the WisDOT Region Traffic Operations Engineer. A sample Application/Permit form is shown in Figure 4.
4. Municipalities *may* be allowed to paint the posts a neutral color that does not detract from the face of the sign. Acceptable neutral colors are black, brown or dark green.
5. Red, white and orange colors **shall not** be used for signposts. A yellow color *may* only be used if the color is to mark a truck route. The municipality **shall** be required to have a local ordinance in place before painting the posts.
6. For any painted sign posts requiring replacement by WisDOT, the municipality will be responsible for re-painting signposts. Any customized signposts requiring immediate replacement by WisDOT will be replaced with 2"x2" square steel posts or 4"x6" wood posts. The municipality *may* later replace the DOT installed post with a NCHRP 350 or MASH crash compliant customized post at their cost.
7. Municipalities **shall not** paint the backside of the signs.
8. Signs installed on customized sign posts **shall** meet WisDOT/MUTCD design and size standards. WisDOT **shall** provide the municipality with all state-owned signs to be installed on customized sign posts. WisDOT *may* require the municipality to replace signs due to age or damage of signs or changes to sign design standards. WisDOT reserves the right to replace existing signs on customized posts owned by the municipality.
9. Sign installation and placement **shall** be to WisDOT standards. See Standard Sign Plates A4-3 and A4-4 for sign mounting height and lateral offset.
10. Existing customized posts on state maintained highways which are not NCHRP 350 or MASH crash compliant **shall** be replaced immediately with 2"x2" square steel posts, or 4"x6" wood posts. The municipality *may* later replace the DOT installed post with a NCHRP 350 or MASH crash compliant customized post at their cost.

11. Wood 4"x6" posts **shall** have 1 1/2" diameter breakaway holes drilled into the 6-inch face of the post, (see figure 1). Breakaway holes are not required in 4"x6" wood posts if the post is mounted behind beam guard or concrete barrier.

Figure 1

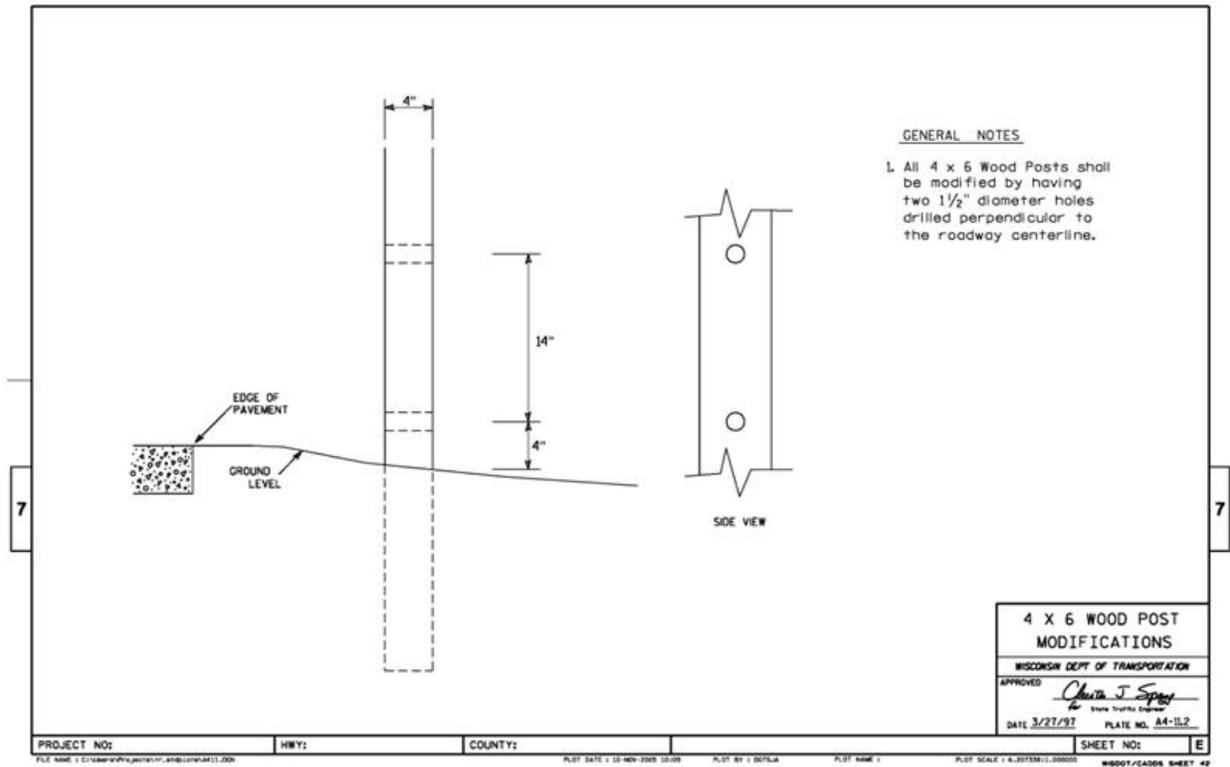


FIGURE 2
Interchange Roundabout

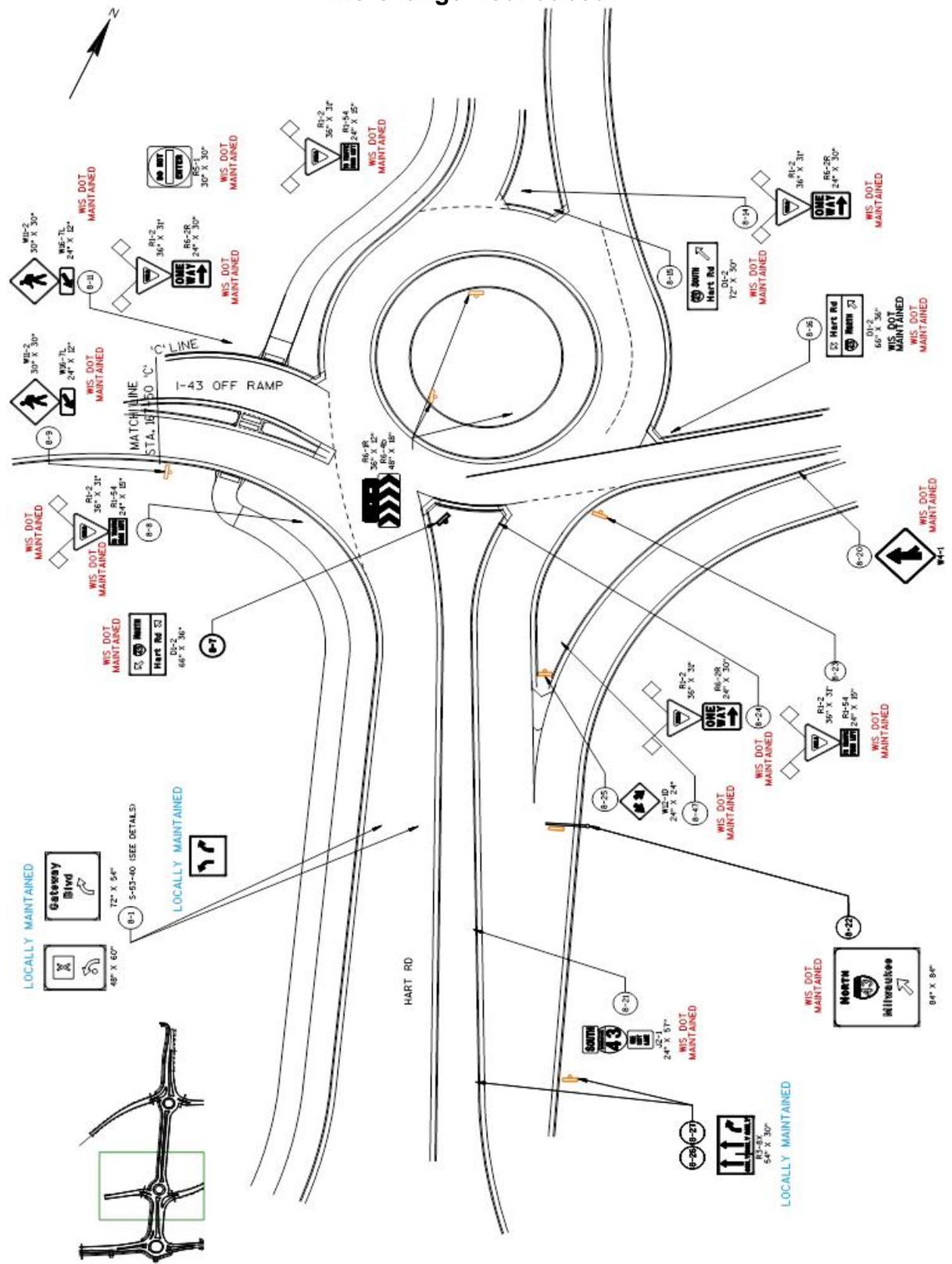


FIGURE 3A
County Highway / State Highway Roundabout
(Signing for local roads is the same as County Highway signing)

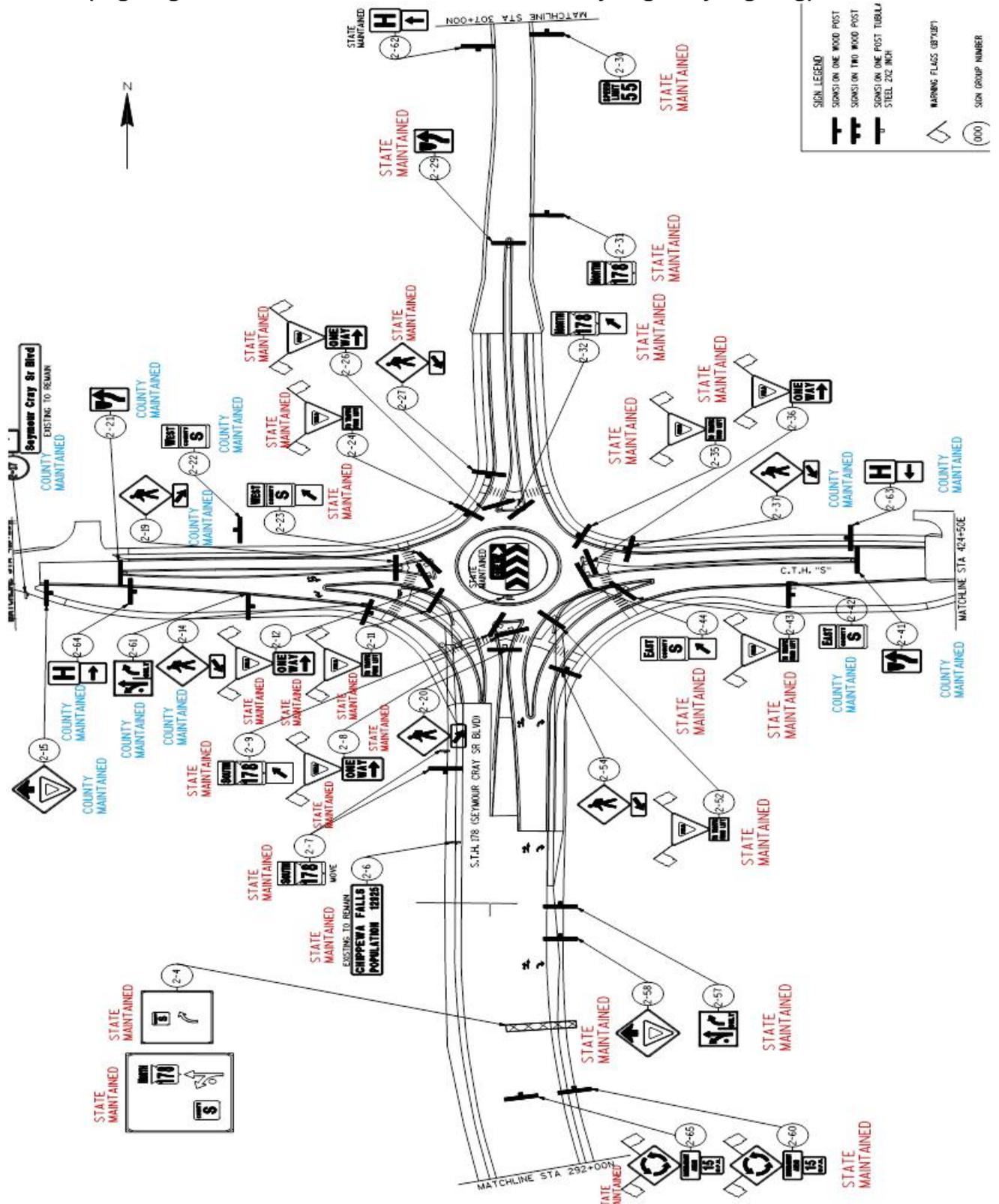


FIGURE 3B
County Highway / State Highway Roundabout
(Signing for local roads is the same as County Highway signing)

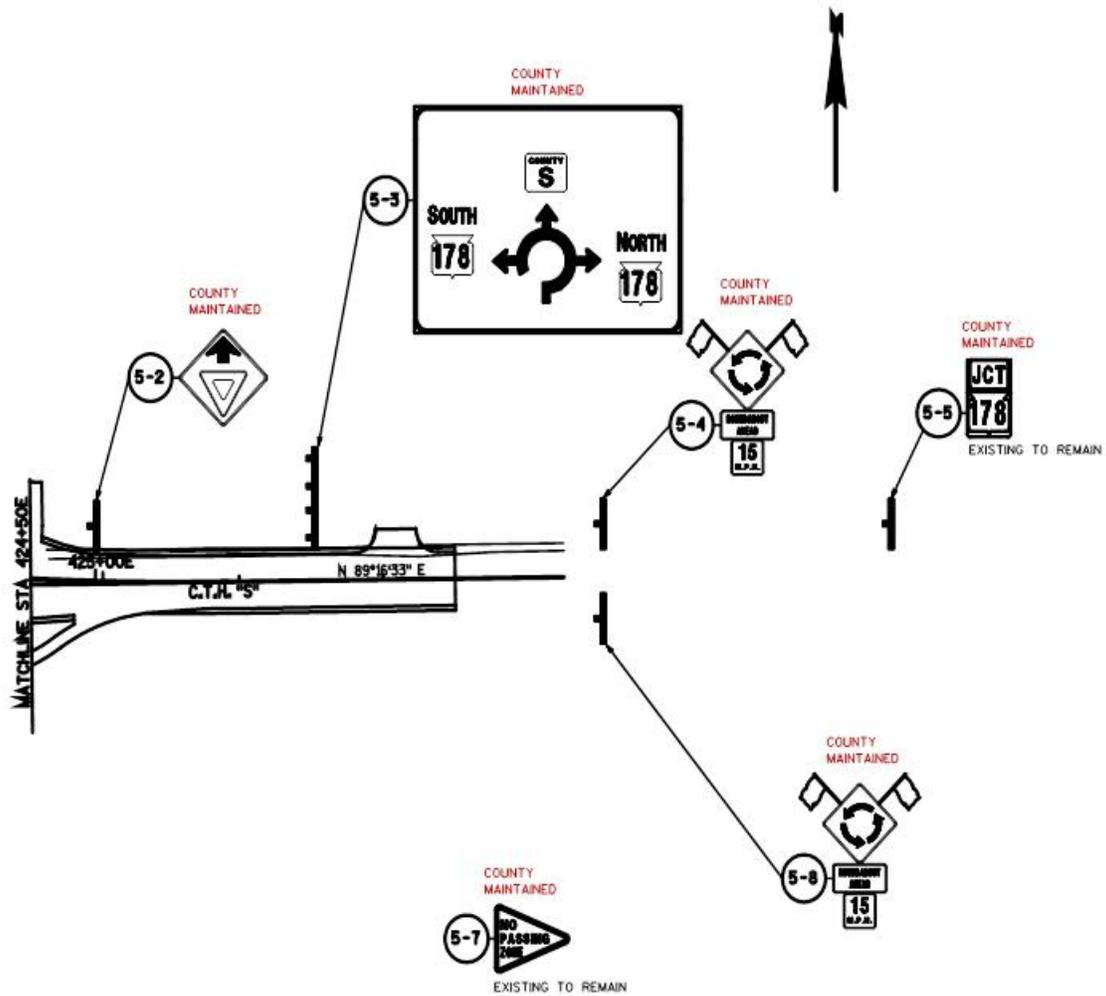


FIGURE 4 Continued

Installation Conditions

1. Terms and conditions of this application/permit shall be in conformance with WisDOT Traffic Guidelines Manual Policy 2-15-52 *Maintenance of Signs and Sign Post Designs*. By entering into this agreement, the Municipality agrees to the terms and cost arrangements in this policy document.
2. For permit requests or sign replacement, WisDOT shall furnish all standard state-owned signs to the municipality for installation on custom posts. For let project installations, the custom posts will be installed as part of construction let plans as non-participating item.
3. All custom sign posts shall be NCHRP 350 or MASH crash compliant. A copy of the certification letter from the Federal Highway Administration shall be attached to this application for each manufacturer's model and style of custom post used.
4. Replacement of custom posts from a different manufacturer or model shall require a new permit/application.
5. The applicant shall retain a copy of this permit and supporting documentation for future reference.
6. Custom post details shall be attached to this application. Region Traffic Operations Engineer shall approve final post design.
7. Region Traffic Operations Engineer shall approve final sign locations. For Improvement Project Agreements, these locations shall be included on the final construction plans.
8. The municipality shall be responsible for costs for removal should future highway projects require the removal of the custom posts.
9. Sign installation and placement shall be to Wisconsin Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and WisDOT standards.
10. This application shall be signed by the City/Village Engineer or the Director of Public Works or Official Governmental Representative.

X

Authorized Representative

Date

Print Name

Title

Approved for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Permit Number = Region (NC,NE,NW,SE,SW) – County Number – Permit Number in county

Permit Number

X

Region Traffic Operations Engineer

Date

Print Name

Area Code-Phone Number

FIGURE 4 Continued**INDEMNIFICATION**

The Applicant shall save and hold the State, its officers, employees, agents, and all private and governmental contractors and subcontractors with the State under Chapter 84 Wisconsin Statutes, harmless from actions of any nature whatsoever (including any by Applicant itself) which arise out of, or are connected with, or are claimed to arise out of or be connected with any of the work done by the Applicant, or the construction or maintenance of facilities by the Applicant, pursuant to this permit or any other permit issued by the State for location of property, lines or facilities on highway right-of-way, (1) while the Applicant is performing its work, or (2) while any of the Applicant's property, equipment, or personnel, are in or about such place or the vicinity thereof, or (3) while any property constructed, placed or operated by or on behalf of Applicant remains on the State's property or right-of-way pursuant to this permit or any other permit issued by the State for location of property, lines or facilities on highway right-of-way; including without limiting the generality of the foregoing, all liability, damages, loss, expense, claims, demands and actions on account of personal injury, death or property loss to the State, its officers, employees, agents, contractors, subcontractors or frequenters; to the Applicant, its employees, agents, contractors, subcontractors, or frequenters; or to any other persons, whether based upon, or claimed to be based upon, statutory (including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, worker's compensation), contractual, tort, or whether or not caused or claimed to have been caused by active or inactive negligence or other breach of duty by the State, its officers, employees, agents, contractors, subcontractors or frequenters; Applicant, its employees, agents, contractors, subcontractors or frequenters; or any other person. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the liability, damage, loss, expense, claims, demands and actions indemnified against shall include all liability, damage, loss, expense, claims, demands and actions for damage to any property, lines or facilities placed by or on behalf of the Applicant pursuant to this permit or any other permit issued by the State for location of property, lines or facilities on highway right-of-way in the past or present, or that are located on any highway or State property or right-of-way with or without a permit issued by the State, for any loss of data, information, or material; for trademark, copyright or patent infringement; for unfair competition or infringement of personal or property rights of any kind whatever. The Applicant shall at its own expense investigate all such claims and demands, attend to their settlement or other disposition, defend all actions based thereon and pay all charges of attorneys and all other costs and expenses of any kind arising from any such liability, damage, loss, claims, demands and actions.

Any transfer, whether voluntary or involuntary, of ownership or control of any property constructed, placed or operated by or on behalf of the Applicant that remains on the State's property or right-of-way pursuant to this

permit shall not release Applicant from any of the indemnification requirements of this permit, unless the State is notified of such transfer in writing. Any acceptance by any other person or entity, whether voluntary or involuntary, of ownership or control of any property constructed, placed or operated by or on behalf of the Applicant that remains on the State's property or right-of-way pursuant to this permit, shall include acceptance of all of the indemnification requirements of this permit by the other person or entity receiving ownership or control.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, a private contractor or subcontractor with the State under Chapter 84 Wisconsin Statutes, that fails to comply with sections 66.047 and 182.0175 Wisconsin Statutes (1985-1986), remains subject to the payment to the Applicant of the actual cost of repair of intentional or negligent damage by the contractor or subcontractor to any property, lines or facilities placed by or on behalf of the Applicant pursuant to this permit or any other permit issued by the State for location of property, lines or facilities on highway right-of-way, and remains subject to payment to the Applicant for losses due to personal injury or death resulting from negligence by the contractor or subcontractor.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the State, or its officers, employees and agents, fail to comply with sections 66.047 and 182.0175 Wisconsin Statutes (1985-1986), the State or its officers, employees and agents, remain subject to the payment to the Applicant of the actual cost of repair of willful and intentional damage by the State, or its officers, employees and agents, to any property, lines or facilities placed by or on behalf of the Applicant pursuant to this permit or any other permit issued by the State for location of property, lines or facilities on highway right-of-way, and remain subject to payment to the Applicant for losses due to personal injury or death resulting from negligence by the State, its officers, employees and agents.

No indemnification of private contractors or subcontractors with the State under Chapter 84 Wisconsin Statutes, shall apply in the event of willful and intentional damage by such private contractors or subcontractors to the property, lines and facilities of the Applicant located on the highway right-of-way pursuant to this permit or any other permit issued by the State for the location of property, lines or facilities on highway right-of-way.