13-12-1 Policy January 2014

GENERAL

Communities may request permits to install banners and/or civic displays to promote special events or to display civic pride. These banners/displays can provide a very effective and efficient means to convey a message to the motorist, and when used correctly can provide a positive effect for the flow of traffic, and ultimately traffic safety.

The MUTCD, Section 1A.01 and Wisconsin State Statute 86.19 clearly state that advertising messages shall not appear on traffic control devices. Even though banners and civic displays are not considered traffic control devices and are not used to control traffic, they can compete with essential traffic control signs. Therefore, careful consideration must be taken to provide signs and messages which do not conflict with these rules or have a negative impact on traffic safety.

Regional Transportation directors, or their designees, may approve or deny applications for permission to install temporary banners or civic displays. Applicants may be municipalities, or private entities who must receive endorsement from the respective municipality. Approval shall be by means of the standard form. Denial should be by letter, giving reasons for rejection.

DEFINITIONS

Banners are defined as flexible, horizontal signs that are either overhead or ground mounted displays that may promote public activities such as parades, celebrations, speeches, concerts, plays, musicals, contests, athletic events and charitable events. Banners are considered short-term and are removed once the event has completed.

Civic Displays are considered a permanent decorative feature installed by the community to promote civic pride and are not associated with a special event. Examples of civic displays include:

- Decorations on light poles, including wrapping
- Community achievements
- Holiday decorations
- Civic mottos or emblems
- Seasonal messages
- Extra enforcement locations, such as EZ Wrap

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.

POLICY

1. Banners and civic displays shall not display commercial advertising or advertise specific commercial products, services or businesses. The inclusion of a brand name within the name of an event, such as "Brand X Bike Race" is permissible.

2. Lettering on banners shall be a minimum of 4" in height and overhead banners shall have a minimum clearance of 17 feet (bottom of banner to top of roadway).

3. All banners shall be made out of a flexible material, and have no horizontal stiffeners, except banners supported on overpasses. Civic displays may be made out of a rigid material.

4. Banners and civic displays shall not be permitted on freeways or expressways.

5. Banners and civic displays shall be removed or replaced when legibility is impaired due to wear or fading.

6. Any new posts installed for banners or civic displays shall be NCHRP 350 crash compliant.
7. Maximum length of time for banners promoting community events is 30 days and 90 days for community promotion. Civic displays may be installed indefinitely, provided they remain in good shape.

8. Banners and civic displays shall not be installed on existing traffic control devices or supports.

9. The applicant shall accept full responsibility for any damage claims from any permitted banner or civic display.

10. Banners located in the highway right-of-way should be located as close to the right-of-way line as possible.