

South Carolina Department of Transportation  
Traffic Engineering Guidelines

**NUMBER:** TG-14

**SUBJECT:** Signing for Traffic Generators

**BACKGROUND:** The Department receives many requests for directional signs for various traffic generators throughout the state. Section 2E.35 of the MUTCD recommends that each state should adopt a policy for supplemental guide signing. This guideline provides recommendations for the signing of specific traffic generators. Part A addresses requests involving the Interstate Highway System and control-of-access roadways. Part B addresses all other types of roadways.

**GUIDELINE:** *Part A: Signing on Interstate/Control-of-Access Facilities:*

Control-of-access facilities such as the Interstate Highway System are designed for high speed and high volume travel making it imperative to limit signing to that which is necessary for the guidance of the motorist. Federal signing guidelines recommend a standard sequence of signs approaching each interchange. These guidelines also address adequate spacing between signs. Spacing becomes more limited when logo signing is provided at interchanges.

For these reasons it is important that signing be reserved for significant traffic generators. The MUTCD recommends allowing one supplemental guide sign to the normal complement of guide signing in each direction at every interchange. These supplemental guide signs should have no more than two destinations.

These supplemental guide signs should not be installed at freeway-to-freeway interchanges. Also, because the Department strives to maintain a high-level of operation along our interstate system, supplemental destinations should only be signed at the interchange with the most direct route to the traffic generator or may be signed in one direction at separate interchanges if this provides the most direct, shortest route in each direction.

In cases where the interchange with the most direct route to the supplemental destination does not have space for additional signing, alternative interchanges may be considered by the Department based on the next most direct route. A supplemental destination cannot be signed at more than one interchange in a single direction of travel.

Below are examples of significant generators for which signing may be considered:

- **Airports – Metropolitan or International**
- **Colleges and Universities – See Traffic Engineering Guideline 28**
- **Technical Colleges – See Traffic Engineering Guideline 28**
- **Military Bases**
- **Arenas, Auditoriums, and Stadiums**
- **Convention Centers**
- **Historical Sites – National or State**
- **Parks – National or State**
- **Medical Facilities**
- **Museums**
- **Zoos**
- **State Fairgrounds**
- **Major Race Tracks**
- **Tourist Information Centers**
- **Cities or Towns other than Primary Destinations**

*Note: This is not an all-inclusive list. There are more traffic generators that are eligible to be considered for interstate signing. These are just some of the most common.*

All of these facilities are important generators; however, it is necessary to establish some criteria to assess the number of motorists who may be interested in locating the facilities. For this reason, the criteria in Attachment A have been established for each type of facility. The first two traffic generators requesting signing that meet the criteria will be signed for. If two or more requests for supplemental signing are received at the same time, the most significant traffic generator will receive signing.

Each traffic generator will be required to provide documentation that meets the criteria set in Attachment A to be considered for signing on an interstate or control-of-access highway. However, it should be noted that if a facility does meet the necessary requirements for interstate signs, that does not mean the facility will automatically receive signing.

If a facility warrants signing and the Department concurs, the requestor shall provide written notification to the Department agreeing to fund all costs associated with fabrication and installation of the signing. The Department shall receive this notification prior to developing a detailed cost estimate, signing plans, or sign layouts.

Not all traffic generators are eligible for interstate signing. Examples of some facilities that are not typically signed for on the Interstate Highway System are:

- Fairgrounds (except state)
- Museums (except state)
- Prisons

- Race Tracks (local)
- Amusement Parks
- National Guard Facilities
- Parking Terminals
- Commercial Ventures (malls, retail stores, subdivisions, etc.)(private and publicly owned)
- Manufacturing Facilities
- Power Plants and Utility Plants

*Note: This list is not intended to be used for the removal of signing that is currently present. This is intended for new requests and projects. Also, this is not an all-inclusive list, and it does not mean that all other facilities/traffic generators are eligible for interstate signing.*

*Part B: Conventional Roads (Non-Interstate):*

Generally, more latitude can be taken in determining what facilities can be signed on conventional roads since speeds are lower and spacing is not as critical. Care should be taken to limit the number of signs to that which is essential for the guidance of motorists.

Typical generators which have been determined to have significance to local drivers and may be considered for signing are listed on Attachment B.

It should be noted that other facilities not listed and considered acceptable for signing should not be signed if they are located on a Primary route since directions to such facilities are reasonably simple and signing would provide minimal benefit.

In order to maintain consistency in signing statewide, exceptions to the above should be approved by the Director of Traffic Engineering.

Approved:   
Director of Traffic Engineering

12-20-2018  
Date

**Attachment A:**

**GUIDELINE CRITERIA FOR SIGNING TRAFFIC GENERATORS  
ON INTERSTATE AND CONTROL-OF-ACCESS HIGHWAYS**

<i>Type of Generator</i>	<i>Specific Criteria</i>	<i>Major Metropolitan Areas</i>	<i>Urban Areas</i>	<i>Rural Areas</i>
Airports	Number of Regularly Scheduled Flights ( <i>One-Way Departures</i> ) Per Day	20	10	10
	Mileage*	8	8	8
Colleges and Universities	See Traffic Engineering Guideline 28			
Technical Colleges				
Military Bases	Employees and Permanently Assigned Military Personnel ( <i>Prime Criterion</i> )	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Mileage*	3	4	5
Arenas Auditoriums Convention Halls	Seating Capacity	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Parking Stalls	500	300	200
	Mileage	2	4	5
	Annual Attendance	200,000	200,000	200,000
Stadiums	Seating Capacity	15,000	10,000	5,000
	Parking Stalls	500	300	200
	Mileage	2	4	5
	Annual Attendance	200,000	200,000	200,000
National Historical Sites National Parks Recreation Areas ( <i>Publicly Owned</i> ) State Parks	Annual Attendance ( <i>Prime Criterion</i> )	200,000	200,000	200,000
	Mileage	2	4	8
Medical Facilities	24 hour hospital with emergency facilities	See Section 2I.02 of the MUTCD		
Trauma Centers	Levels I & II Only			
Tourist Information Centers		See Section 2I.08 of the MUTCD – Private Tourist Information Centers must meet these criteria in addition to the ones in Attachment B.		
Historic Cities		See Traffic Engineering Guideline 13		
Zoos, Museums	Annual Attendance	200,000	200,000	200,000
Major Race Tracks	1 mile or more in length			
Fairgrounds	State Only			

<sup>1</sup>50,000 or more population in Central City of Urban Area.

<sup>2</sup>5,000 – 49,999 population in Central City of Urban Area.

\*Maximum distance from freeway interchange.

## **Attachment B:**

### **GUIDELINE CRITERIA FOR SIGNING TRAFFIC GENERATORS – NON-INTERSTATE**

<i>TYPE OF GENERATOR</i>	<i>SPECIFIC CRITERIA</i>
<u>Business District</u>	May be signed at the request of a town if the primary route bypasses the downtown shopping area.
<u>Military Cemeteries</u>	May be signed from the last point of turn from the nearest primary route.
<u>Governmental Facilities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Courthouses</li> <li>b. Public Research Parks</li> <li>c. State/Federal Prisons</li> <li>d. Social Services Facilities</li> <li>e. Public Industrial Parks</li> <li>f. S.C. State Farmers Market</li> <li>g. Clemson University Experimental Stations</li> <li>h. County Recycling Centers</li> </ul>	May be signed from the last point of turn from the nearest primary route.
<u>Historical Attractions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sites and Monuments</li> <li>b. Public Homes and Buildings</li> <li>c. Private (non-profit) Homes, Buildings, and Plantations</li> <li>d. Churches</li> </ul>	Must be recognized by the state or local historical society. May be signed from the last point of turn from the nearest primary route. Churches must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
<u>Military Bases and Forts</u>	Air Force, Army, Navy, or Marines Facilities with 5,000 permanently assigned military personnel.
<u>Medical :</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Hospitals</li> <li>b. 24-Hour Emergency Care Centers (Emergency Medical Care Signs)</li> <li>c. Trauma Centers</li> </ul>	Items a and b: See Section 2I.02 of the MUTCD  Item c: Levels I & II only

**Attachment B Con't:**

<i>TYPE OF GENERATOR</i>	<i>SPECIFIC CRITERIA</i>
<p><u>Primary &amp; Secondary Educational Facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Grade Schools</li> <li>b. Middle Schools</li> <li>c. High Schools</li> <li>d. Private Grade, Middle or High Schools</li> <li>e. Public Vocational Schools</li> </ul>	<p>See Traffic Engineering Guideline 28</p>
<p><u>Post-Secondary Educational Facilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Colleges</li> <li>b. Universities</li> <li>c. Junior Colleges</li> <li>d. Seminaries</li> <li>e. Public Technical Colleges</li> <li>f. Career Colleges</li> </ul>	<p>See Traffic Engineering Guideline 28</p>
<p><u>Transportation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Railroad Stations</li> <li>b. Park and Ride Facilities</li> <li>c. Public Parking</li> <li>d. State Ports Authorities</li> <li>e. Bus Terminals</li> <li>f. Airports</li> </ul>	<p>A, B, C, D, and E may be signed from the last point of turn from the nearest primary route to the facility.</p> <p>F. Airports            Commercial Airports – Symbol signing should be provided if the number of regularly scheduled flights (one-way departures) per day is 20 in major metropolitan areas, and 10 in urban or rural areas. The signs should be confined to those needed to direct motorists from a built-up downtown area and from major highways near the airport not to exceed 8 miles</p> <p>Local Airports            Standard D1-1 signs and arrow may be used from the last point of turn from the nearest primary route to the airport.</p>

**Attachment B Con't:**

<i>TYPE OF GENERATOR</i>	<i>SPECIFIC CRITERIA</i>
<p><u>Recreation/Conservation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Public Zoos, Aquariums, Planetariums, Museums</li> <li>b. State, National, City or County Parks</li> <li>c. Regional Fairgrounds</li> <li>d. Exposition Centers</li> <li>e. Race Tracks (over one mile in length)</li> <li>f. Private Visitor Information/Tourist Information</li> <li>g. Stadiums, Coliseums, Auditoriums, Arenas</li> <li>h. Public Boat Ramps/Landings</li> </ul>	<p>Items a, b, c, d, and e may be signed from the last point of turn from the nearest primary route. In the event the facility is signed from an interstate, adequate signing should be provided from the interstate to the facility.</p> <p>f. Private visitor information/tourist information must meet the following criteria:            The Department may provide signing for private tourist information centers which are endorsed by the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, a local Chamber of Commerce, or local government. If the center is located on the property of a private business that provides motorist services such as gas, food, lodging, or camping, the center must be housed in a separate building and must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide tourist related information on attractions statewide at no cost.</li> <li>2. Have an attendant on duty knowledgeable about statewide tourist attractions.</li> <li>3. Be open continuously 8 hours per day, 7 days a week.</li> <li>4. Facility must provide at least 500 square feet of display and lounge area and be adequately heated in the winter and cooled in the summer.</li> </ol> <p>g. Stadiums, coliseums, auditoriums, arenas – must meet the criteria in attachment A except for mileage.</p> <p>h. Boat ramps/landings, signs may be provided from the nearest primary route to suitable points where access, including boat launching facilities, are provided to water. No signs are to be installed for a specific access point when the only available access is private. When signs will be directing motorists to more than one point of access, the lake name and the word “access” should be shown. At the roadway leading to a specific access point, the name of the landing may be shown. These signs should be brown and white with 6” copy.</p>