

South Carolina Department of Transportation  
Traffic Engineering Guidelines

**NUMBER:** TG-18

**SUBJECT:** Wayfinding Signing

**BACKGROUND:** The Department has been approached by several municipalities requesting that they be allowed to install Wayfinding signs. Wayfinding signs are signs used to direct motorist to various points of interest in and around a city or town. The Federal Highway Administration has issued an opinion that these signs may be allowed and that each state shall develop a state policy for wayfinding signing.

This guideline provides statewide criteria for wayfinding signing to be installed on the State Highway System.

**GUIDELINE:** Section A: STANDARDS

1. The local government requesting wayfinding signs shall develop and approve through local resolution the criteria for the destinations that will be shown on the wayfinding signing. The local government shall submit their wayfinding signing criteria to the District Traffic Engineer for approval prior to developing their wayfinding sign system plan.
2. Wayfinding signs shall not be allowed on full controlled access highways, including ramps. They may be installed on other highways where adequate spacing is available.
3. The planning, design, installation, and maintenance of all wayfinding signs and their assemblies are the responsibility of the local government, including signs on the State Highway System. Maintenance includes replacing or repairing the sign or supports if damaged or deteriorated, and relocating the signs if necessary due to roadway redesign or other activities. All work will be performed at no cost to SCDOT under an approved encroachment permit. SCDOT will have final approval of all sign locations.
4. Commercial establishments may not be signed. No advertising is allowed on the signs.

## Section B: SIGN DESIGN

1. Red, yellow, orange, purple, fluorescent yellow-green or fluorescent pink shall not be used as background colors for wayfinding signs, in order to minimize confusion with regulatory, warning, construction, or incident management signs.
2. A minimum contrast value of legend color to background color of 70 percent is required for wayfinding signs (ADA minimum contrast value).
3. An enhancement marker consists of a shape, color, and/or pictograph that is used, at the option of the local government, as an aesthetic identifier for the wayfinding signing system for an area as a whole. They may be used with wayfinding signs or may be incorporated into the overall design of the wayfinding sign. The size and shape of an enhancement marker shall be smaller than the wayfinding signs themselves and shall not be designed to have an appearance that could be mistaken as being a traffic control device.
4. Examples of enhancement markers on wayfinding signs.



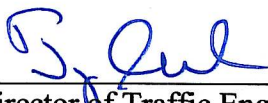
5. A pictograph may be incorporated into the overall design of a wayfinding sign. A pictograph is a pictorial representation used to identify a governmental jurisdiction or agency, or an area of jurisdiction and the size shall not exceed two times the letter height of the destination legend.
6. There should be a maximum of three destinations shown on each wayfinding sign.
7. All lettering for street names and destinations used on wayfinding signs shall be a combination of lower-case letters with initial upper-case letters. All other word messages on wayfinding signs shall be in upper-case letters. All fonts shall be in accordance with Section 2D.05 of the MUTCD.
8. The lettering size on wayfinding signs shall be in accordance with Section 2D.06 of the MUTCD.
9. Arrows shown on wayfinding signs shall be designed in accordance with Section 2D.08 of the MUTCD. The positioning of arrows relative to the destinations shown shall be in accordance with Section 2D.37 of the MUTCD.

10. Wayfinding signs and their supporting structures shall be designed, constructed, and installed to meet the Department's clear zone and safety criteria, including breakaway features. The sign supports shall meet the breakaway criteria of NCHRP 350 including having an approval letter issued by the FHWA. A listing of approval letters can be found at

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway\\_dept/policy\\_guide/road\\_hardware/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/policy_guide/road_hardware/)


11. All messages, borders, legends, and background of community wayfinding guide signs and any identification enhancement markers shall be retroreflective. The sign panels shall be in accordance with Section 651 of the *Standard Specifications for Highway Construction*.

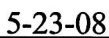
Revision Approval:

  
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Director of Traffic Engineering

  
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Date

Original Approval:

  
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Director of Traffic Engineering

  
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