

**North Carolina Department of Transportation  
Division of Highways  
Division of Transportation Mobility and Safety**

**STANDARD PRACTICE  
For  
Historic Signing**

The purpose of this standard practice is to establish minimum guidelines used for supplemental guide (directional) signing for qualifying historic sites and towns/downtowns. This practice is not intended to determine the historical significance of the requesting facility or property but to set reasonable guidelines to promote statewide consistency in responses to historical signing requests.

It is the standard practice of the NCDOT to allow installation of supplemental guide signs for official state historic sites and approved historic towns/downtowns. Requesting facilities or properties that are not recognized as official state historic sites and qualify for the Logo Program (L-12) or the Tourist Oriented Directional Sign (TODS) Program (T-8) shall be signed under the appropriate program. Requesting facilities and properties that are not recognized as official state historic sites and do not qualify for the Logo or TODS Program shall be evaluated under the sign practice for moderate traffic generators (T-14). And finally, requesting historic sites that do not qualify for either sign program, or as a moderate traffic generator, and are not officially recognized by the state shall not receive highway signing.

Signs shall be designed, located and erected according to the standards of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the North Carolina Roadway Standard Drawings, and the standards and criteria herein.

**CRITERIA FOR HISTORIC TOWNS/DOWNTOWNS**

- Normal downtown guide signing will not be allowed with the addition of historic downtown guide signing.
- Normal town guide signing will not be allowed with the addition of historic town guide signing.

**CRITERIA FOR NC HISTORIC SITES**

- Qualifying sites shall be officially recognized as State Historic Sites by the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and listed on the North Carolina Historic Sites homepage ([www.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.nchistoricsites.org)).

## **CRITERIA FOR ALL HISTORIC SIGNING**

- Signs for qualifying historic sites and towns/downtowns shall be limited to the closest freeway not to exceed 15 miles from the state historic site or town/downtown in rural areas and five miles from the state historic site or town/downtown in urban areas. Signs located on non-full control of access and partial control of access facilities, and all conventional roadways shall be limited to five miles from the state historic site or town/downtown in rural areas and 1 mile from the state historic site or town/downtown in urban areas and shall not be signed farther than the closest primary (US/NC) route. Signs should not be installed in another town's municipal limits. Additionally, the one-way trip to the destination is limited to four turns with the return trip via the same path, and the trip must generally be a direct (non-circuitous) route from the roadway. However, a one-way trip to the destination requiring more than four turns, or on a circuitous route, or requiring a return trip via a different path will be reviewed on a case by case basis by the appropriate Engineer or designate to determine if approved.
- If freeway signing is approved, and when more than 2 turns are required to reach the destination from the freeway (not including the turn from the ramp or the turn into the entrance to the historic site or town/downtown), route markers with directional arrows shall be installed to indicate the routing back to the freeway.
- When signed, historic sites or towns/downtowns shall be shown on supplemental guide signs. Supplemental guide signs for historic sites or towns/downtowns shall not be installed as overhead signs.
- Supplemental guide signs for historic sites or towns/downtowns should be minimized and combined with other supplemental guide messages when appropriate. Supplemental guide signs for historic sites or towns/downtowns shall not be installed at freeway-to-freeway interchanges.
- Signing for historic sites or towns/downtowns is considered supplemental to the overall signing system for freeways and expressways. Therefore, before signs for a historic site or town/downtown are installed, sufficient space shall exist to accommodate the placement of the sign without interfering or conflicting with required signing.
- Sign designs shall conform to the attached NCDOT sign typical drawing. Color shall conform to MUTCD standards.
- When historic site or town/downtown signing is placed and is redundant with existing guide signs for the same destination, the guide signs originally in place shall be removed.
- The historic site or town/downtown requesting signing shall have on-site signing in place at the destination, indicating the location of the historic site and/or boundaries of the historic downtown. Effective: April 06, 2010 Page 2 of 3 Revised: January 4, 2011
- All requests for signing of state historic sites or towns/downtowns must be submitted to the appropriate Division Engineer, or designate, having jurisdiction in the county in which the signs are proposed.

- All costs associated with administration, design, fabrication, erection, inspection, and maintenance of any approved historic signs shall be the responsibility of the requesting party or others. An agreement between the Department of Transportation and the individual requesting the signs will be required, including payment by the requester for all costs. However, if NCDOT has a construction project that requires replacement of existing signs, new sign costs will be included in the project costs.
- The NCDOT reserves the right to cover, relocate, or remove any signs for maintenance or construction operations, or when deemed to be in the best interest of the NCDOT or the traveling public, without advance notice. The NCDOT reserves the right to remove signs when roadway improvements or changes in the roadway cross section or configuration will no longer accommodate the existing signs. No refund or reimbursement will be made for removed signs. If existing signs no longer meet the Department's size and design requirements for an upgraded roadway and existing signs are removed, the facility may request to upgrade their signs, provided that minimum spacing is available on the upgraded roadway.
- This practice is not intended for use in removal of existing signs; however, when a new project is established for the North Carolina highway system, or when existing signs are in need of replacement, repair, or maintenance, conformance with this practice is required.
- As described in General Statute 136-30 (a), (b), and (d), the NCDOT has the authority to control all signs within the right of way of the State Highway System.

**§ G.S. 136-30. Uniform signs and other traffic control devices on highways, streets, and public vehicular areas.** (a) State Highway System. -The Department of Transportation may number and mark highways in the State highway system. All traffic signs and other traffic control devices placed on a highway in the State highway system must conform to the Uniform Manual. The Department of Transportation shall have the power to control all signs within the right-of-way of highways in the State highway system. The Department of Transportation may erect signs directing persons to roads and places of importance. (b) Municipal Street System. -All traffic signs and other traffic control devices placed on a municipal street system street must conform to the appearance criteria of the Uniform Manual. All traffic control devices placed on a highway that is within the corporate limits of a municipality but is part of the State highway system must be approved by the Department of Transportation. (d) Definition. -As used in this section, the term "Uniform Manual" means the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways, published by the United States Department of Transportation, and any supplement to that Manual adopted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.