

**North Carolina Department of Transportation
Division of Highway
Traffic Engineering and Safety Systems Branch**

**STANDARD PRACTICE
for
Supplemental Guide Signs for Major Traffic Generators**

It will be the standard practice of NCDOT to install supplemental guide signs to qualifying traffic generators. Signs shall be located and erected according to the standards of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), the North Carolina Supplement to the MUTCD, the North Carolina Roadway Standard Drawings, and the standards and criteria herein.

CRITERIA

Supplemental Guide Signs: These signs guide travelers to sites and specific facilities of major interest, such as convention centers, arenas, amphitheaters, or major cultural, recreational, and historical facilities. The guidelines and fee structure for traffic generators are as follows:

- To qualify for supplemental guide signing as a traffic generator, the facility shall have documented vehicle trip generations in amounts of 250,000 or more annually. A trip is defined as a single or one direction vehicle movement with either the origin or destination (exiting or entering) inside the site. For trip generation purposes, the total trip ends for a land use over a given period of time are the total of all trips entering plus all trips exiting a site during a designated time period. A bus is considered a single vehicle, and all persons on a bus count as one trip in and one trip out. Only unfamiliar motorists such as tourists or visitors will be counted in vehicle trip generation for the purpose of qualifying for sign installations. Trips generated by employees and regularly reoccurring trips such as deliveries and other services are not considered unfamiliar motorists.
- Signs for qualifying traffic generators shall be limited to the closest freeway interchange, not to exceed 15 miles from the facility. Signs located on non control of access and partial control of access facilities, and all conventional roadways shall also be limited to 15 miles from the facility.
- Traffic generators shall be signed generically. (Examples: Arena, Stadium Complex, Zoo, Amphitheater, etc.)
- All costs for qualifying and approved supplemental signing at the closest interchange within 15 miles to the facility including ramp and trailblazer signs shall be the responsibility of the North Carolina Department of Transportation.
- When signed, major traffic generators shall be shown on supplemental guide signs. Supplemental guide signs for traffic generators shall not be installed as overhead signs, unless the sign is needed where space is not available at the roadside, such as a location with restricted right-of-way or location with noise or barrier wall preventing a ground mounted installation.
- Signing for traffic generators is considered supplemental to the overall signing system for freeways and expressways. Therefore, before a sign for a traffic generator is installed, sufficient space shall exist to accommodate the placement of the sign without interfering or conflicting with required signing.

- Office buildings and retail establishments shall not be signed on state highway right of way. Shopping Centers may be signed as specified in title 19A NCAC 02B.0215 and if approved by the State Traffic Engineer.
- Supplemental guide signs for traffic generators should be minimized and combined with other supplemental guide messages when appropriate. Supplemental guide signs for traffic generators should not be installed at freeway-to-freeway interchanges.
- All requests for signing on partial and non-full control of access facilities must be approved by the appropriate Division Engineer or designate having jurisdiction in the county in which the signs are proposed. All requests for signing on full control of access facilities must be approved by the State Traffic Engineer.
- The Division Engineer or designate having jurisdiction in the county in which the signs are proposed will make signing decisions concerning one-time or annual events that draw large crowds. These events will be investigated on individual basis based on the merits of each request. Such signs would be removed at the conclusion of the special event.
- All documentation required to verify that qualification criteria are met shall be provided to the Department by the requester. Three (3) consecutive years of data shall be included with request. This information could be supplied in terms of parking passes distributed, total on-premise parking spaces available specifying the number of bus parking spaces, attendance records, financial statements showing revenue earned from ticket sales, or other data to determine trip generation. One person (attendee) does not equate to a trip. Facility must maintain minimum criteria for signs to remain in place. The Department may request/require documentation at any time from the facility to verify criteria are met.
- Route markers with directional arrows shall be installed to indicate routing back to the roadway facility from which the motorist came.
- For a facility that meets all criteria herein as a major traffic generator and qualifies under another specific practice; for example, a museum or historical site, the design/color requirement in this practice shall take precedence. Signs for fully qualifying facilities that meet all criteria in this practice and that are installed within the distance limits allowed by this practice are paid by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. For example, a historic site that is being signed as a major traffic generator shall have generic message on green background with white text on the sign and shall be paid for by the Department.
- Traffic generators that are not event-oriented facilities (such as Museums, Zoos, Historic sites, etc.) shall be operational and staffed with one or more attendants for traveling guest/tourist/customers a minimum of five (5) days a week, eight hours a day for a total of 40 hours per week to qualify for signs.
- Traffic generators that are not event-oriented facilities shall have a permanent on premise sign posted in a prominent and visible location that states the name of the facility with the days and hours of operation.
- The facility shall provide on-site public restroom facilities, drinking water suitable for public consumption, and an on-site telephone available for public use.

- The facility shall have adequate on-site parking during hours of operation for guests, tourists, and customers.
- The Department has the responsibility and authority to relocate or remove signs if a need for a higher priority regulatory, warning, or guide sign is identified.
- 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. 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.
- Sign designs shall conform to the attached NCDOT standards. All signs for major traffic generators (facilities receiving signs based on trip generation) shall have a green background with white letters and border.
- 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.

Note: Facilities that do not meet the trip generation criteria in this practice may qualify under a specific practice. (See <http://www.doh.dot.state.nc.us/preconstruct/traffic/tepl/index.html>)