

NCDOT Logo Program: Business Panels on Logo Signs – Decisions and Design Information

General:

North Carolina's Logo Sign Program is administered by the Department of Transportation and is intended to provide notification of qualified specific service businesses located at an interchange. The program is not intended to provide advertisement of information not specifically related to the approved services, which include gas, food, lodging, camping, and attractions.

Additional Logo Panels Installed Above or Below a Logo Sign are Not Allowed:

By design, Logo signs hold a specific number of business panels. Under no circumstances are additional panels allowed above or below the Logo signs beyond the number of panels the sign is designed to hold.

Maximum of One Panel Allowed on a Logo Sign per Business Location for a Qualifying Specific Service Offered by a Business:

A qualifying business is allowed only one business panel on a Logo sign per each approved service (or brand of service) offered at the business location. The service must fall in the category of one of the five approved specific services. Displaying multiple or duplicate Logo panels to identify a single service at one location is not permitted. It could be misleading to motorists looking for an interchange with multiple alternative locations available to ensure one would be open at late at night or for competition in pricing for the service. Allowing multiple or duplicate panels for the same service at one location could also limit the participation of another separate business. If it is determined that the Department inadvertently allowed multiple or duplicate signs for one business location, NCDOT will cancel extraneous contracts and remove duplicate panels as soon as possible.

Separate Business Panels for each Participating Business Location are Required on the Logo Signs when Two or More Businesses of the Same Name or Brand of Service are Located at the Same Interchange:

Each participating business location is required to occupy and pay for a space on the mainline and ramp Logo signs, even when the business has the same name or brand (Logo) as another participating business location at the same interchange. For example, if there are two participating Exxon gas services located at an interchange, the mainline sign would hold 2 Exxon panels and the ramp sign would hold each Exxon panel with the direction and mileage to each posted below the panels. Each business location would have a separate contract and have clearly visible on-premise signs.

This situation is the only circumstance where multiple or duplicate Logo panels (brands) for the same service would be displayed on a Logo sign.

The decision to require each business location to be signed with separate panels was made for several reasons. It lets motorists know there are more than one business of the service category

available at the interchange and allows them to make their decision appropriately. Also, if we did not require each to be displayed on the mainline complications would occur when 6 businesses were participating and only 5 displayed on the mainline sign. It would appear one space was available to rent when in fact we could not offer it since the ramp would already hold the maximum number of panels. Also complications would occur if one business went out of business or decided to discontinue their participation and with Department decisions and actions regarding billing, non-payment, and subsequent removal of business panels.

When Separate Panels are Permitted on a Logo Sign for Two or More Services (or Brands of a Service) of the Same Service Category Located on the Same Property with the Same Owner:

Gas: The only circumstance where gas services located on one property would qualify for two separate panels on a Logo sign is if two gas services exist on the same property and are both clearly signed separately with on-premise signs and clearly posted on the gas pumps. An example would be a gas business selling Exxon and BP gas on the same property.

Food: The only circumstance where food services located on one property would qualify for two separate panels on a Logo sign is if two food services exist on the same property and are both clearly signed separately with on-premise signs. An example would be a KFC and Taco Bell on the same property.

Attraction: The only circumstance where attraction services on one property would qualify for two or more separate panels on a Logo sign is if the services exist on the same property and are all clearly signed separately with on-premise signs. An example would be a regional amusement park with more than one qualifying attraction.

Lodging and Camping: This circumstance would not be applicable to Lodging or Camping services.

In the above circumstances, it is considered separate services (or brands of a service) offered under one specific service category and requires separate contracts, one being Standard and any additional contracts being Provisional, such that the additional space(s) held on the Logo sign may not keep another fully qualifying business location from participating on the sign.

When Sharing of One Panel on a Logo Sign is Permitted by Two Services (or Brands of a Service) of the Same Service Category Located on the Same Property with the Same Owner:

In the cases described above, the business may opt to include two Logo designs within one panel, providing the overall Logo design is recognizable at freeway speeds. Careful consideration should be given by the business when determining the business Logo panel design to ensure the two food services are clearly displayed on the panel. As with all business Logo panel designs, the design must be submitted to the Department for review and must be approved prior to fabrication. The Department has the right to require revisions to the design if it is determined that the design is not recognizable at freeway speeds and could cause safety issues.

In the circumstance described above where the services share a business Logo panel, a maximum of two services (or brands of services) are permitted on the same business Logo panel and they must fall under the same specific service category.

General Logo Design Information for all Services:

All design criteria included in the Logo Manual must be met.

A business Logo panel is not permitted to include information unrelated to the service. The following information (or wording) is not allowed on any panel: phone numbers, web addresses, prices, credit cards accepted, ATM services offered, lottery ticket sales, “Travel Plaza”, “Truck Stop”, “Buses Welcome”, etc., or any item or service sold or offered that is not related to the specific service. Convenience store/mini-mart name or any other information related to a separate part of the business not related to the specific service category signed is not allowed on the business Logo Panel.

Additionally, since there is no service category for convenience stores, grocery stores, or retail stores, a store may not participate in the Logo program.

Additional Information Related to Gas Business Logo Panel Design:

A Gas service that offers an alternative fuel as part of their gas service, is not permitted to have two separate panels on the Logo sign; however, the business may include the alternative fuel information, since it is directly related to the service, within the one Logo panel allowed, providing the minimum letter size requirement is met. In addition to alternative fuels offered such as E85 or B20, the messages DIESEL and 24 HRS are considered related to the gas service and therefore may be included as supplemental information on the gas business Logo panel.

A gas station selling branded gas must include the branded gas Logo on the sign. The branded gas Logo is considered easily recognizable (unless otherwise determined by the Department) and successfully informs motorists of the gas provided. It is intended that the business panels provide the clearest notification possible of the service to the motoring public and it has been decided that the branded Logos provide this information optimally on Logo signs. If the branded gas Logo is not clearly recognizable as a gas service, as determined by the Signing Logo Engineer or Signing Programs Engineer, then the word GAS or FUEL will be required on the business panel.

The panel design for a gas station selling unbranded gas must include the name posted on the gas pumps, which must match the on-premise signing and be clearly posted for motorists to see when approaching the entranceway to the gas business. If the name posted on the gas pumps is not clearly recognizable as a gas service, as determined by the Signing Logo Engineer or Signing Programs Engineer, then the word GAS or FUEL will be required on the business panel.

The words GAS or FUEL when included on the business panel must meet the minimum letter size and font as specified by the Department.