



Community Wayfinding Signing

Function

Community wayfinding signs are part of a coordinated and continuous system of signs that direct tourists and other road users to numerous key civic, cultural, visitor, and recreational attractions and other destinations within a city or a local urbanized or downtown area. This type of signing is used to support established community-wide plans promoting attractions and destinations within a community. Community wayfinding signs are a type of destination guide sign for conventional roads, with a common color and/or unique header. Such signing shall not be installed on freeways, including interchange ramps. Community wayfinding signing is not meant for a single destination or area within a community. Examples of designs and sign placement used are shown in the figures.

The sign system should be established on a local municipal or equivalent jurisdictional level or an urbanized area of adjoining municipalities or equivalent that form an identifiable geographic entity that is conducive to a cohesive and continuous system of signs. Community wayfinding signs shall not be used on a regional or statewide basis

Signing for attractions, as noted above, is considered secondary to primary signing needs. Community wayfinding signs shall not interfere with other signs of greater importance as outlined in Signing Priorities and shall not be installed where adequate spacing cannot be provided between the community wayfinding sign and other higher priority signs. Community wayfinding signs shall not be installed in a position where they would obscure the road users' view of other traffic control devices and shall not be mounted overhead.

Highway signing is not intended for the purpose of advertising for the facility, but to direct and guide unfamiliar traffic seeking the attraction or destination. Community wayfinding signs should not be used to provide direction to primary destinations eligible for signs in other sections of this Guideline or highway routes or streets. Destination or other guide signs should be used for this purpose and shall have priority over any community wayfinding sign in placement, prominence, and conspicuity. If destinations that would be eligible for signs in other sections of this Guideline are part of an established community-wide plan, then all existing Department non-freeway signs shall be removed once the community wayfinding signs are in place.

Design

The Department will permit municipalities (cities, villages, and urban townships) or equivalent jurisdictional areas with established community wayfinding plans, to install signs within Department right-of-way, within their jurisdiction, to attractions and other destinations away from the state trunkline system, subject to the following requirements:

1. The proposed use shall not interfere presently or in the foreseeable future with construction, reconstruction, operation, and maintenance of the non-freeway involved. Permit applications will only be considered from municipalities.
2. The municipality requesting the signs shall be responsible for all work and costs associated with sign fabrication, sign supports, installation, and all future maintenance. Any requests for signs shall be accompanied by a resolution of support from the municipality and will include a commitment of the agency to permit requirements, installation, maintenance, and all associated costs of the signs.
3. Use of Department right-of-way shall require approval through the permit process. An Individual Application and Permit¹ must be completed by the municipality for each sign location and returned to the appropriate Transportation Service Center Office for processing.
4. All permit applications shall be reviewed by the Transportation Service Center's Traffic and Safety Representative for compliance with traffic operational and safety requirements before approval. Before any community wayfinding sign system is permitted by the Department, any existing illegal advertising billboards pertaining to attractions and destinations within the established plan shall be removed.
5. The design of the signs and their locations shall be approved by the Transportation Service Center's Traffic and Safety representative before fabrication begins.
6. Any proposed construction or use must conform to Department standards with respect to setback requirements, spacing with other Department signs, as well as standards for breakaway or yielding type supports. Crashworthy supports are required.
7. Community wayfinding signing shall not be installed on freeways including interchange ramps.
8. Color coding or pictographs may be used on community wayfinding signs to help road users distinguish between multiple potentially confusing traffic generator destinations located in different neighborhoods or subareas within a community or area. Pictographs are a pictorial representation used to identify a governmental jurisdiction, an area of jurisdiction, a governmental agency, a governmental-approved university or college, or a government-approved institution.

¹ [MDOT Repository Forms – Form 22050](#)

If coding is to be utilized in a community wayfinding system, the color coding or pictograph may be included on signs posted at the boundary of the community wayfinding signing area. This boundary informational sign shall have a white legend and border on a green background.

The color coding or pictographs shall apply to a specific, identifiable neighborhood or geographical subarea within the overall area covered by the community wayfinding system. Color coding or pictographs shall not be used to distinguish between different types of destinations within the same designated neighborhood or subarea. Color coding shall be accomplished by the use of different colored square or rectangular panels on the face of the sign, each positioned to the left of the neighborhood or named geographic area to which the color-coding panel applies. The height of the colored square or rectangular panels shall not exceed two times the height of the upper-case letters of the principal legend on the sign. If a pictograph is used, its height shall not exceed two times the height of the upper-case letters of the principal legend on the sign. Except for pictographs, symbols that are not approved for use on guide signs per the *Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MMUTCD) shall not be used on community wayfinding signs.

Examples of Community Wayfinding Signs

A – Community Wayfinding Signs with Headers



B – Color Coded Community Wayfinding Signs



Boundary Informational Sign

9. Except for the boundary informational sign, community wayfinding signs may use background colors other than green in order to provide color identification for the wayfinding destinations by geographical area within the overall wayfinding system. Color coded community wayfinding signs may be used with or without the boundary informational sign displaying corresponding color-coding panels described above in number 8. In order to minimize possible confusion with critical, higher-priority regulatory and warning sign color meanings readily understood by road users, the standard highway sign colors of red, orange, yellow, purple, or the fluorescent versions thereof: fluorescent yellow-green and fluorescent pink, shall not be used as background colors for community wayfinding signs.
10. A unique header may be used on a community wayfinding sign assembly, or incorporated into the overall design of a community wayfinding sign, as a means of visually identifying the sign as part of an overall system of community wayfinding signs and destinations. The header consists of a shape, color, and/or pictograph used as a visual identifier for the community wayfinding system for an area. The sizes and shapes of headers shall be smaller than the community wayfinding signs themselves. Headers shall not be designed to have an appearance that could be mistaken by road users as being a traffic control device. The area of the header should not exceed 1/5 of the area of the community wayfinding sign with which it is mounted in the same sign assembly. If a header is to be used, it shall be used on all community wayfinding signs in the system.
11. Community wayfinding signs, exclusive of any header used, should be rectangular in shape. The maximum width of the community wayfinding sign will be 8 feet. The maximum area will be 32 square feet. All messages, borders, legends, and backgrounds of community wayfinding signs and any headers shall be retroreflective. The legend for destinations shall be white. The maximum area of the header will be 6 square feet.

Wayfinding signs are limited to three destinations per sign. The closest destination lying straight ahead shall be at the top of the sign and below it the closest destinations to the left and to the right, in that order. Arrows pointing to the right shall be at the extreme right of the sign, and arrows pointing left or up shall be at the extreme left. Horizontal lines of a color that contrasts with the sign background color should be used to separate groups of destinations by direction from each other.

Abbreviations should be kept to a minimum and should include only those that are commonly recognized and understood per the MMUTCD.

12. The lettering style used for destination and directional legends shall be Standard Highway Alphabet or Clearview font. A lettering style other than these may be used on community wayfinding signs if an engineering study determines the legibility and recognition values for the chosen lettering style meet or exceed the values for the Standard Alphabets for the same legend height and stroke width.

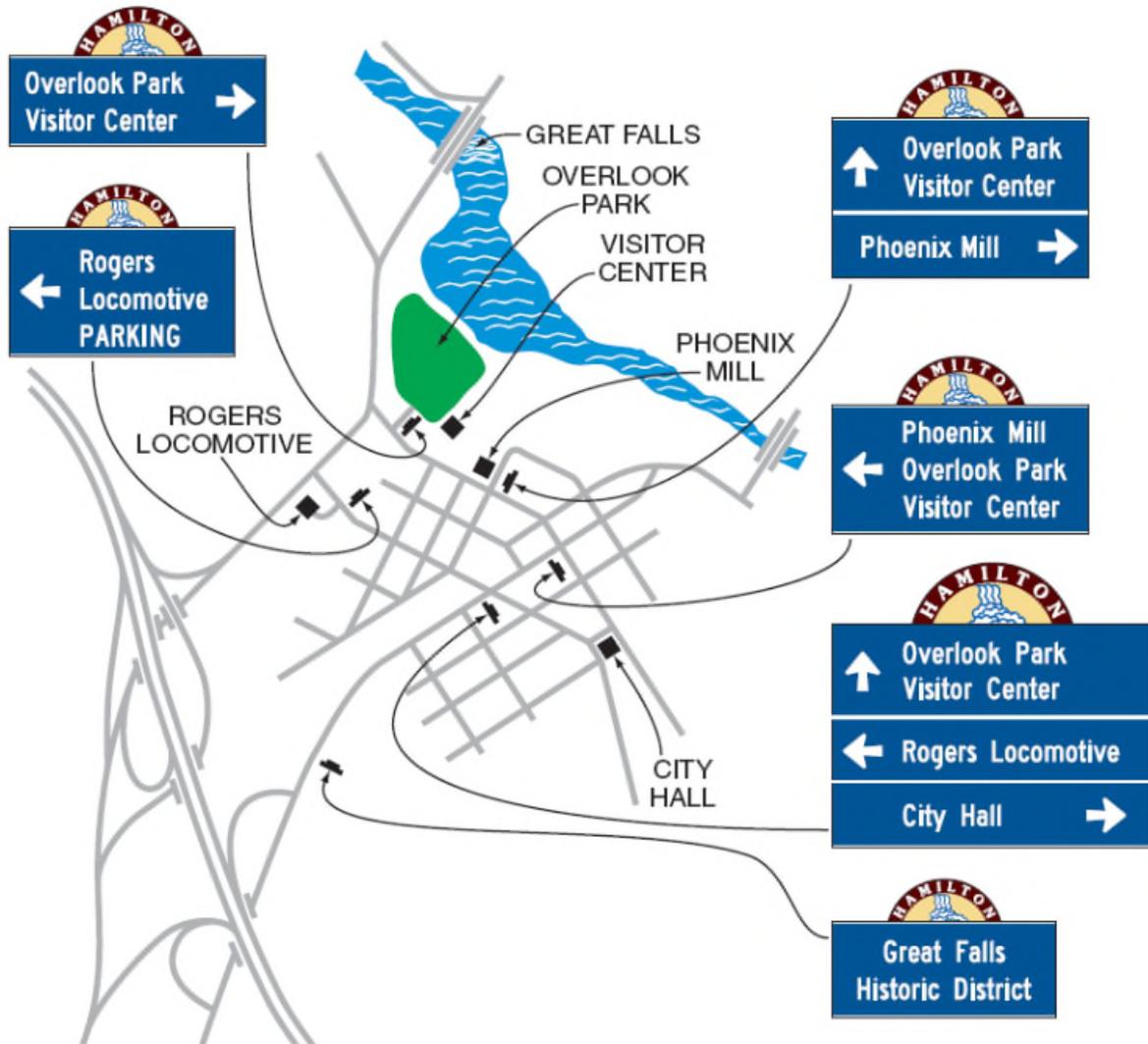
The minimum letter heights are provided below in the table. The lettering for destinations on community wayfinding signs shall be a combination of lower-case letters with initial upper-case letters. All other word messages shall be in upper-case letters. An example of other word messages is PARKING.

Posted Speed (mph)	Minimum Legend Height	
	Destinations	Other Word Messages
30 to 55	6-inch UPPERCASE/ 4.5-inch lowercase	6-inch UPPERCASE
25 or less	4-inch UPPERCASE/ 3-inch lowercase	4-inch UPPERCASE

The above requirements do not apply to the header. Smaller legend may be used for wayfinding signs intended only for pedestrians.

13. The name(s) of local official(s), internet and e-mail addresses, including domain names and uniform resource locators (URL) will not be allowed on community wayfinding signing. Business logos, commercial graphics, or other forms of advertising shall not be used on community wayfinding signs.
14. The sign shall not have internal or external illumination or animation.
15. A maximum of two signs per intersection, one per direction will be permitted.

Example of a Community Wayfinding Sign System



Example of a Color-Coded Community Wayfinding Sign System

