



**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**TRAFFIC OPERATIONS DIVISION**  
SUITE 1200 JAMES K. POLK BUILDING  
505 DEADERICK STREET  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0338  
(615) 741-5017

**CLAY BRIGHT**  
COMMISSIONER

**BILL LEE**  
GOVERNOR

**TRAFFIC OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM NO. 2004**

**TDOT Guidelines for Gateway Projects – 2020 Update**

**Effective August 1st, 2020** the update to the TDOT Guidelines for Gateway Projects will take effect.

The TDOT Guidelines for Gateway Projects can be found on TDOT's website at the following address:

<https://www.tn.gov/tdot/traffic-operations-division/traffic-engineering-office/sign-policy-design-and-programs.html>

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Brad Freeze".

---

P. Brad Freeze, PE  
Director  
Traffic Operations Division

PBF:ESJ  
3/17/2020



# TDOT Guidelines for Gateway Projects

Monuments, Transportation Art, Landscaping, and Welcome Signs



# Table of Contents

## 1. Overview

- A. Background .....3
- B. Roles and Responsibilities of TDOT Staff .....4

## 2. Monuments and Art

- A. Application and Review Process (Excess Land Coordinator Process) .....4
- B. Initial Requirements (Conceptual Plans) .....5
- C. Final Requirements (Stamped Plans) .....5
- D. Guidelines for Design and Placement .....7

## 3. Landscaping

- A. Application and Review Process .....11
- B. Initial Requirements (Conceptual Plans) .....12
- C. Final Requirements (Stamped Plans) .....12
- D. Guidelines for Design and Placement .....13

## 4. Maintenance and Removal

- A. Maintenance .....14
- B. Removal .....15

## 5. “Welcome To” Signs

- A. Background.....15
- B. Criteria .....16
- C. Signs at City Limit Boundary .....17
- D. Signs Not at City Limit Boundary or County Line .....18

## Appendixes – Gateway Projects

- A. Example Acknowledgement Sign.....21
- B. Example “Do Not Mow” Sign.....21
- C. Gateway / Art Photo Examples.....22

## Overview

### Background

The Gateways Program is intended to help local cities and counties enhance the entryways to their local communities and to provide a process for improving the aesthetics of interchanges by adding features like Monuments, Transportation Art, or Landscaping.

A Gateway Monument is defined as any freestanding structure or sign with significant architectural features that is a non-integral or non-required feature, and which communicates the name of a city or county. A Gateway Monument may include the officially adopted seal or slogan of the local government. Gateway Monuments may be placed in or near off-ramp areas of an interchange exit of a freeway or expressway, or along the mainline of conventional highways. Gateway Monuments will not be allowed along the mainlines of freeways or expressways or at freeway-to-freeway (major directional) interchanges. Gateway Monuments may be directed toward the mainline of the highway or placed to be viewed as drivers exit the mainline.

Proposals for Gateway Monuments or Transportation Art must be requested and submitted by the local government and not a non-governmental entity, and they must provide a resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed project during the application process.

Transportation Art may include graphic or sculptural artwork, either freestanding or placed on required engineering features (such as noise barriers, retaining walls, bridges, bridge abutments, bridge rails, or slope paving) that expresses something special about a community's history, resources, or character.

Gateway Monuments differ from Transportation Art in that a Gateway Monument must be a freestanding structure or sign that is not integral to a required highway facility.

Required engineered highway features, including but not limited to sound walls, retaining walls, bridges, bridge abutments, bridge rails, and slope paving, may provide the opportunity for the placement of visual, graphic, or sculptural representations of a community's identity, including its history, resources, or other defining characteristics under the category defined as "Transportation Art."

Gateway Monuments which propose simple installations of non-MUTCD (*Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*) compliant signs that do not have significant architectural or landscaped features are not allowed.

Landscaping is a type of roadside enhancement project that allows local governments to enhance an interchange or roadside by planting various type of trees, shrubs, or grass, or by altering the contours of the ground.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of TDOT Staff**

**TDOT's Regional Excess Land Coordinator** shall facilitate the Region's review and submit the proposed project (Gateway Monuments and Art) for the Excess Land Committee to review. Landscape projects which also include a monument feature and/or art work will also go through the Excess Land process.

**TDOT's Regional Traffic Engineering** shall ensure that a proposed Gateway project (Monuments and Transportation Art with freestanding features) are safe relative to traffic and placed outside the clear zone and ensure that the proposed project conforms to the "Guidelines for the Design and Placement of Gateway Monuments and Art" contained in this document.

**TDOT's Regional Highway Beautification Office** shall ensure that proposed Gateway Art projects with non-freestanding features, such as a mural on a state bridge, conform to all relevant Outdoor Advertising regulations and the "Guidelines for the Design and Placement of Transportation Art" contained in this document. All artwork on state bridges will require approval by the TDOT Structures Division. This office will also be a primary stakeholder in reviewing Landscaping projects.

## **Monuments and Art**

### **Application and Review Process (Excess Land Coordinator Process)**

1. The Applicant (city or county government) contacts TDOT's Regional Excess Land Coordinator and submits a license application, along with conceptual plans.
2. The Regional Excess Land Coordinator facilitates a review of the conceptual plans with TDOT's Regional Traffic Engineering Office, TDOT's Regional Highway Beautification Office, and other TDOT Divisions as needed, such as TDOT Structures.
3. The Regional Traffic Engineer and Regional Highway Beautification Office review and approve or deny conceptual plans based on relevant guidelines and input from other TDOT divisions as needed and advise the Excess Land Coordinator on the findings.
4. If the conceptual plans are approved, the Regional Excess Land Coordinator submits the official request to the HQ Excess Land Manager to be presented to the Excess Land Committee.
5. If the general concept is approved and the project includes Monuments or Transportation Art with freestanding features, the Regional Traffic Engineer makes recommendations to the applicant for the scope of final plans.
6. If the general concept is approved and the project consists of Transportation Art with no freestanding features, such as a mural on a state bridge, the Regional

Highway Beautification Office makes recommendations to the applicant for the scope of final plans. Murals will generally not require formal stamped plans.

7. Final plans are submitted, and a final review is performed by the Regional Traffic Engineer and the Regional Highway Beautification Office.
8. Once final approvals are obtained from the Regional Traffic Engineer, the Highway Beautification Office, and the Excess Land process, a license agreement will be issued by the HQ Excess Land Office. The HQ Excess Land Office will retain file copies of all relevant documents, including the signed license agreement.
9. The project is built.

Applicants should contact TDOT's Regional Excess Land Coordinator to start the application and review process set forth under these guidelines for Gateway Projects for Monuments and Art. All applications must be submitted by the local government where the project is to be located.

Regional Excess Land Coordinators can be found at the following link under the ROW Division:

<https://www.tn.gov/tdot/right-of-way-division/excess-land-office/excess-land-staff.html>

## **Initial Requirements (Conceptual Plans)**

Initial plans should generally include the following information:

1. A site-specific proposal (drawing with vicinity map).
2. Dimensions and offsets (right-of-way lines, edge of pavement, center line, and clear recovery zone).
3. The location for placement of the proposed Gateway Monument or Art (topography).
4. The proposed Gateway Monument or Art.
5. A discussion of proposed materials, colors, and text.
6. Any proposed message to be communicated.

## **Final Requirements (Stamped Plans)**

Gateway Monument or Transportation Art proposals must be submitted by the local government that has jurisdiction of the area where the project will be incorporated within the transportation facility.

For Gateway Monuments or Transportation Art with freestanding features, the local government shall provide the Department professionally prepared plans stamped by an

engineer licensed to practice in Tennessee. TDOT Traffic Engineering may waive the requirement for stamped plans at their discretion, as well as dictate the overall scope of the plans when the freestanding feature is not of significant size or exceeds 6 feet in height, or where the size of the feature would not generally warrant reinforced concrete footings. Stamped plans for art projects with non-freestanding features, like murals, will generally not be mandatory unless special circumstances require their need.

The following “Final Submittal Requirements” are presented here as general guidelines and may vary based on the scope and complexity of the proposed project at the discretion of TDOT Traffic Engineering office.

Exhibits, plans, and details shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. A full description of the proposed Gateway Monument or Transportation Art, including location, construction, and installation techniques; details necessary to convey construction methods; and proposed materials, including but not limited to paint and protective coatings.
2. Specifications for proposed materials, including material data sheets.
3. A scaled drawing or model, or both, if requested.
4. A construction schedule.
5. A cost estimate.
6. Traffic control plans and provisions, if required.
7. A maintenance plan and schedule.
8. Environmental documentation, if required by law.
9. The location for placement of the proposed Gateway Monument.
10. Elevations and details clearly illustrating and dimensioning the proposal. (The Gateway Monument must be aesthetically pleasing on all visible sides.)
11. A proposed access for maintenance purposes.
12. A proposed maintenance plan schedule.
13. A proposed color scheme.
14. Proposed lighting.
15. The proposed message to be communicated.

The Local Entity shall adhere to and maintain compliance with all Departmental Rules, Regulations, and any additional requirements the Department may apply to the project.

If at any time during the process, the Department recommends any changes or withholds concurrence on a project that has not yet received final approval, the proposal may be returned to the Local Entity for revision. Once the Department approves a Gateway

Monument or Transportation Art proposal, no changes shall be made to the Gateway Monument without prior written approval.

The approval of a Gateway Monument proposal shall be made with due consideration to safety (location, potential for motorist distraction, accessibility for maintenance, etc.), esthetics, community support, and maintainability, and it shall be in conformance with all outdoor advertising laws and regulations. The Commissioner of the Department shall retain authority to reject a project at his or her discretion if the project is found to be not in the public interest.

## **Guidelines for Design and Placement**

### **Proposed Gateway Monuments shall:**

1. Be freestanding.
2. Have a resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed project.
3. Be ground mounted (not above any roadway) and not be located along the mainline of any freeway or expressway.
4. Incorporate only a community name, logo, graphic, seal, or slogan that has been associated historically with the community. Slogans must have an endorsing resolution passed by the local legislative body. Dates of establishment are not considered slogans.
5. Include approved protective graffiti coatings, if required by the Department.
6. Be developed to require low or no maintenance to minimize exposure of workers and others to potential risks.
7. Be appropriate to its proposed setting and community context.
8. Be in proper size and scale with its surroundings. The maximum size is not to exceed an approximate width of 25 feet, a height of 20 feet, or a depth of 10 feet.
9. Be composed of materials that are durable for the projected life span of the project.
10. Be located well beyond the clear recovery zone, placed so that there will be minimal likelihood of being struck by an errant vehicle, or placed in a protected location, and have the site-specific concurrence of the regional Traffic Engineering office.
11. Be located where maintenance can be safely performed.
12. Conform to all relevant Tennessee Outdoor advertising rules, regulations, laws, and local sign ordinances. The following website for outdoor advertising shows the State of Tennessee Rules and Regulations and Laws for Outdoor Advertising:

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/environment/beautification/outdooradvertising.htm>



13. Be subject to the review and approval of the Department in consideration of design, size, and scale for appropriate integration on urban or rural highway features.

**Proposed Gateway Monuments shall not:**

1. Be allowed along the mainline of a freeway or expressway or within the median areas. (Ramp areas and interchange exits areas may be permitted if appropriate conditions are met and are not within the clear zone.)
2. Contain religious, political, special interest, private, or commercial messages of any sort, including but not limited to symbols, logos, business names, trade names, or jingles.
3. Contain any displays of any sort such as advertising, decorative banners, or non-governmental flags. (Official City, County, State, or U.S. Flags are permitted in limited numbers.)
4. Display telephone numbers, street addresses, or internet addresses.
5. Interfere with airspace above the roadway.
6. Include reflective or glaring surface finishes.
7. Include illumination that impairs or distracts the vision of transportation system users. Other lighting may be permitted. All lighting features must be appropriately designed and approved by a licensed electrical engineer.
8. Display blinking or intermittent lights, changeable message signs, or any type of digital display.
9. Include any type of water features.
10. Include moving elements (kinetic art) or simulated movement.
11. Include images of flags.
12. Interfere with either official traffic control devices or with the operational right-of-way above the roadway.
13. Be placed within the State right-of-way upon trees or be painted or drawn upon rocks or other existing natural features.
14. Make use of simulated colors or combinations of colors usually reserved for official traffic control devices described in the *FHWA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.
15. Restrict sight distance.
16. Require the removal of trees or other vegetation for visibility, or harm trees during construction. Pruning of tree branches or roots and removal of shrubs should be avoided and will be allowed only with the approval of the Regional Engineer Director.

17. Negatively impact existing highway features, including existing signs or irrigation systems.
18. Protrude or span over travel lanes or roadbed.

**Proposed Transportation Art shall:**

1. Have a resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed project.
2. Be appropriate to its proposed setting.
3. Be in proper scale with its surroundings.
4. Not display text (except "Welcome To"), flags, or religious, political, or commercial symbols.
5. Not create a distraction to the motoring public (e.g., the proposed art should be large enough to interpret at highway speed but not be so large that it demands attention from the motorist).
6. Be composed of materials that are durable for the projected lifespan of the project.
7. Be located where the owners can safely perform required maintenance as specified in the license agreement and in conformance with TDOT procedures.
8. Be fully funded for design, installation, maintenance, and removal by others for its projected life span.
9. Conform to all relevant Tennessee Outdoor Advertising Rule, Regulations, and Laws.

The following website for outdoor advertising shows the State of Tennessee Rules and Regulations and Laws for Outdoor Advertising:

<http://www.tdot.state.tn.us/environment/beautification/outdooradvertising.htm>

10. Not be placed along the main line of a freeway or expressway.
11. Not imitate, obscure, or interfere with traffic control devices.
12. Not interfere with airspace above the roadway.
13. Not be placed within the State highway right-of-way up on trees, rocks, or other natural features.
14. Not adversely affect existing structures, drainage patterns, storm water runoff quality, natural vegetation, landscaping, or other planting.
15. Be located outside of the clear recovery zone (as defined in the *Highway Design Manual*). Transportation Art must be placed as far from the traveled way or edge of the roadway as is practical, with consideration for the visibility of the art.

16. Not simulate colors or combinations of colors usually reserved for official traffic control devices described in the *American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)* or the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*.
17. Not include reflective or glaring surface finishes.
18. Not include illumination that impairs or distracts the vision of transportation system users. Other lighting may be permitted. Lighting may be allowed on structures only when approved in accordance with current requirements.
19. Not include blinking or intermittent lights.
20. Not include moving elements (kinetic art) or simulate movement.
21. Not restrict sight distance.
22. Not include any form of advertising that would conflict with any relevant Outdoor Advertising Rule or Act, such as a wall or rock displaying an outdoor advertising message or a barn with a painted message that would be considered outdoor advertising.
23. Not display text, flags, or religious, political, or commercial symbols.
24. Be designed to minimize ongoing maintenance needs.
25. Be consistent with Structures Division inspection requirements, including the following conditions:
  - Paint used on structures should not fill or obscure cracks. Latex or other flexible type paints may be used on concrete structures only with written permission from the Department's Structure Division.
  - Painting of steel structures will only be permitted with written permission from the Structures Division.
  - Painted art on concrete structures should avoid load-carrying, stress-bearing structural members, including but not limited to bridge girders, soffits, columns, and piers. Wing walls and abutments are preferred locations for painted art.
  - Artwork must not impair the necessary inspection of bridges, retaining walls, and other structures.
  - To facilitate TDOT's inspection access to structures, mural art may be placed on removable panels.Chipping, blasting, or in any way modifying existing concrete surfaces is prohibited.

# Landscaping

## Application and Review Process

1. The Applicant (city or county government or non-profit organization) submits a conceptual plan to the Regional Director of Operations. If the applicant is a non-profit organization, the applicant should also submit a written letter from the affected county executive/mayor or municipal mayor showing approval of the project, along with a copy of a resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed project.
2. The Regional Director of Operations coordinates a review of the conceptual plans with TDOT's Regional Highway Beautification Office and other TDOT Divisions, as needed.
3. The Regional Director of Operations and the Regional Highway Beautification Office review conceptual plans, approve or deny them, and advise the applicant. Plans are approved or denied based on relevant guidelines contained herein and set forth in TDOT's Landscape Design Guidelines, and with input from other TDOT divisions, as needed.
4. If the general concept is approved, the Regional Director of Operations makes recommendations for the scope of final plans.
5. Final plans are submitted, and a final review is performed by the Regional Director of Operations and the Regional Highway Beautification Office. If the final plan is approved, the Regional Director of Operations advises the Regional Attorney.
6. The Regional Attorney prepares appropriate licensing and maintenance agreements for all required signatures and provides final project approval.
7. Landscaping starts.
8. TDOT installs standard *MUTCD*-compliant signs. Signs will be placed outside the clear zone and parallel to the off-ramps and not be visible from the mainline of the freeway. TDOT will place one (1) sign per landscaped interchange quadrant or four (4) total. See example acknowledgement sign in Appendix A.

Applicants should contact TDOT's Regional Director of Operations to start the application and review process set forth under these guidelines for TDOT's Landscaping and Landscape Design Guidelines. Local community groups and charitable organizations are encouraged to participate in this process and should contact their local governments to partner.

Regional Directors of Operations can be found at the following link under their respective regions:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/tdot/find-local-information.html>

## **Initial Requirements (Conceptual Plans)**

Initial plans should include the following information:

1. A site-specific proposal (drawing with vicinity map).
2. The dimensions and offsets (right-of-way lines, edge of pavement, center line, and clear recovery zone).
3. The location for placement of the proposed Landscaping (topography).
4. The proposed Landscaping plant types.
5. A discussion of proposed plants.
6. Any proposed sponsor name for acknowledgement signs.

## **Final Requirements (Stamped Plans)**

Landscaping plans must be approved by the local government that has jurisdiction of the area where the project will be incorporated within the transportation facility. Plans must include a copy of the resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed Landscaping project, as well as an approval letter from the affected county executive/mayor or municipal mayor.

The applicant should provide the Department professionally prepared plans stamped by a landscape architect licensed to practice in Tennessee. The Regional Director of Operations may waive the requirement for stamped plans at his or her discretion, as well as dictate the overall scope of the plans.

The following “Final Submittal Requirements” are presented here as general guidelines and may vary based on the scope and complexity of the proposed project, at the discretion of the Regional Director of Operations.

Exhibits, plans, and details shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. A full description of the proposed Landscaping, including location, planting methods and techniques, and proposed plants.
2. A copy of the resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed Landscaping project and letter from the county executive/mayor or municipal mayor.
3. Specifications and quantities of the proposed plants.
4. A scaled drawing of the proposed Landscaping.
5. A planting schedule.
6. A cost estimate.

7. Traffic control plans and provisions.
8. A maintenance plan and schedule.
9. A plan to protect plantings.
10. Environmental documentation, if required by law.
11. A proposed access for maintenance purposes.
12. Any proposed sponsor name for acknowledgement signs.

The Applicant shall adhere to and maintain compliance with all Departmental Rules, Regulations, and any additional requirements the Department may apply to the project.

If, at any time during the process, the Department recommends any changes or withholds concurrence on a project that has not yet received final approval, the proposal may be returned to the Local Entity for revision. Once the Department approves a Landscape project, no significant changes shall be made to the project without prior written approval.

The approval of a Landscape project shall be made with due consideration to safety (location, potential for motorist distraction, accessibility for maintenance, etc.), aesthetics, plant viability, community support, and maintainability, and it shall be in conformance with all relevant laws and regulations. The Commissioner of the Department shall retain authority to reject a project at his or her discretion if the project is found to be not in the public interest.

## **Guidelines for Design and Placement**

Proposed Landscape Projects shall:

1. Have a signed license agreement executed by TDOT's regional Attorney.
2. Be consistent with TDOT's Landscape Design Guidelines.
3. Have a resolution passed by the relevant local legislative body in support of the proposed Landscaping project, including an approval letter from the county executive/mayor or municipal mayor.
4. Be installed and maintained by either a licensed, bonded, ensured contractor under contract with the relevant local government or by local government employees trained in current work zone traffic control management per the *MUTCD*.
5. Not be installed or maintained by volunteers on any fully controlled access highway. However, volunteers may be utilized on conventional state routes, provided the local government assumes all liability for claims arising out of conduct on the part of the volunteers for which the local governmental entity would be liable under the Tennessee Governmental Tort Liability Act, Tenn. Code Ann. § 29-20-101, et seq., up to the limits for which the local governmental entity could be held

liable for such conduct under that act, arising from its use of the state's right-of-way.

6. Be planned and implemented to be located a safe distance from the roadway.
7. Have an approved maintenance plan signed and agreed upon by TDOT and the applicant.
8. Have proper traffic control consistent with the *MUTCD* during all times workers are present.
9. Be developed to require low or no maintenance to minimize exposure of workers and others to potential risks.
10. Be appropriate to its proposed setting and community context.
11. Be located well beyond the clear recovery zone, placed in such a way that there will be minimal likelihood of being struck by an errant vehicle, or be in a protected location.
12. Be located where maintenance can be safely performed.
13. Contain a plan to protect planting, including locations for standard "Do Not Mow" signs or similar signs, to be installed by the local government sponsor. All signs must be installed on crashworthy supports. See appendix B for an example design.

## **Maintenance and Removal**

### **Maintenance**

A License Agreement for the care and upkeep of the said Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping must be established between the Applicant and the Department.

Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping shall be kept clean, free of graffiti, and in good repair. The Applicant shall be required to provide for regularly scheduled maintenance, as described in the maintenance agreement, for its projected lifespan, including graffiti removal and restoration work to maintain the integrity of the approved project. Graffiti removal shall conform to current Department policies and guidelines, which require prompt removal of offensive messages and timely removal of all other graffiti. Maintenance practices shall protect air and water quality as required by law.

The Department may perform maintenance activities in the area of the Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping, such as litter pickup and other maintenance that is normally associated with the transportation facility or right-of-way. The Department will not provide maintenance of the Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping itself. Any other maintenance activities anticipated by the Applicant

that are over and above what the Department would normally provide will be documented by the Maintenance Agreement.

## **Removal**

The Applicant shall remove Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping which, in the opinion of the Department, creates a safety or operational concern due to deterioration or inadequate maintenance. The Department will notify the Applicant when it has determined that the Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping needs special attention. In the event that the Applicant fails to maintain, repair, rehabilitate, or remove the Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping project in a timely manner, the Department may remove it after 60 days following the notification to the Applicant and may bill the Applicant for all costs of removal and restoration of the area.

The Department reserves the right to remove the Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping to perform construction, rehabilitation, or other necessary activities affecting the transportation facilities without any obligation, compensation to, or approval of the Applicant. The Department will strive to notify the Applicant of its intent to remove the Gateway Monument, Art, Landscaping, or other community identification to allow for its timely removal and salvage by the Applicant (if possible).

The Department reserves the right to remove or alter any Gateway Monument, Transportation Art, or Landscaping that presents an immediate safety hazard to the public without delay or advanced notification to the Applicant.

## **Guidelines for “Welcome To” Signs**

### **Background**

The purpose of this standard practice is to establish guidelines for “Welcome To” signs at or near city limits and county line boundaries along the mainline of fully controlled access highways in Tennessee. This practice also allows municipalities and counties the flexibility to display slogans that depict the character or identity of their jurisdiction on official highway signs. This practice sets reasonable guidelines by restricting the number of slogans and overall sign size. The intent is also to promote statewide consistency in responses for “Welcome To” signing requests.

Conventional state highways are not eligible under these guidelines but are still eligible for the TDOT standard TN-3 City Limit Sign or TN-2 County Line Sign, which TDOT provides under its supplemental guide sign program. If the city or county elects to use a non-standard TDOT-designed sign on conventional highways, the sign must meet all *MUTCD* requirements and state sign specifications and be done at the expense of the local government having jurisdiction.



“Welcome To” signs installed along fully controlled access highways for municipalities or counties as specified in this practice shall be located and erected according to the standards of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*, the *Tennessee Supplement to the Standard Highway Sign Book*, and the Standard Specifications of the Department. In order to qualify under these guidelines, the city limits or county line must intersect the mainline of the highway to be signed. When a city or county boundary is merely nearby or adjacent to the mainline of the highway but does not intersect the highway, the city or county is not eligible under these guidelines.

## **Criteria**

Requests for “Welcome To” signs should be directed to the appropriate Regional Traffic Engineer and shall include a resolution passed by the appropriate local legislative body for any slogans to be used when applicable. A “Welcome To” sign with no slogan requested does not require a resolution but must come from the chief elected official of the city or county.

The resolution must also recognize a maximum installation of 3 years for any dated sign message, such as “Home of 2014 State Chess Champions”. At or after the end of the third year, Regional Traffic forces should remove any dated sign message. All approved resolutions must be forwarded to the Regional Traffic Engineer, with a copy sent to the State Traffic Engineer prior to final approval for “Welcome To” signing. The Regional Traffic Engineer will determine the best locations for the signs and provide the needed information to the HQ Traffic Office, who will have the signs fabricated and installed once funds have been received by the Department.

All costs associated with administration, designing, fabricating, installation, inspection, and maintaining any approved optional “Welcome To” signs will be the responsibility of the requesting party. The applicant will be provided a cost estimate, and funds for signs must be provided before signs are fabricated. Any funds in excess of \$100.00 over the estimated cost will be returned, and any shortages more than \$100.00 must be provided by the applicant after completion of the sign fabrication and installation, once notified by the Department.

“Welcome To” signs shall be erected at the municipal or county boundary limits or as near as possible. Only one installation of a “Welcome To” sign is permitted per direction of roadway. Additional ramp signs are not permitted.

A city which has boundaries that cross a controlled access highway but which has no exit nearby is generally not eligible for signs under this program, but in some cases, the Department’s Chief Engineer may make an exception if he deems it appropriate.

“Welcome To” signs may include a maximum of 2 slogans and are not to exceed 3 lines of text, and the primary top sign shall not exceed 3 lines of text, not including the “City Limits” or “County Line” message.

When “Welcome To” city or county signs are installed at the actual city limits or county line, then the “City Limits” or “County Line” message shall be within the “Welcome To” (top) part of the sign. The message “City Limit” is not considered to be within the maximum lines of copy, and the 2-panel maximum applies. The options are described as “A” and “B”. (See typical sign layouts for maximum sizes and additional design information):

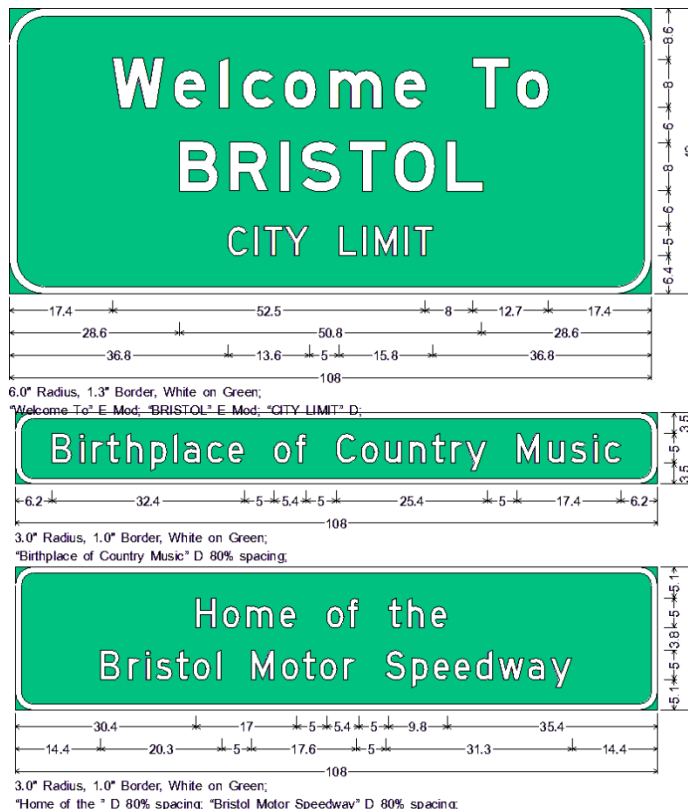
### New or Modified Signs at City Limit Boundary

**This location is required when it is possible to install sign at a city limit.**

If the proposed “Welcome To” sign location is at the boundary line of the municipality, then the following design configurations should be followed:

1. The message “City Limit or “County Line” shall be included in the main (top) sign. (“City Limit” or “County Line” is not counted as a part of the 3 lines of copy and 2-slogan maximum.)
2. One or two slogans not exceeding a total of 3 lines of copy may be attached as supplemental panels below the main sign.

Example:



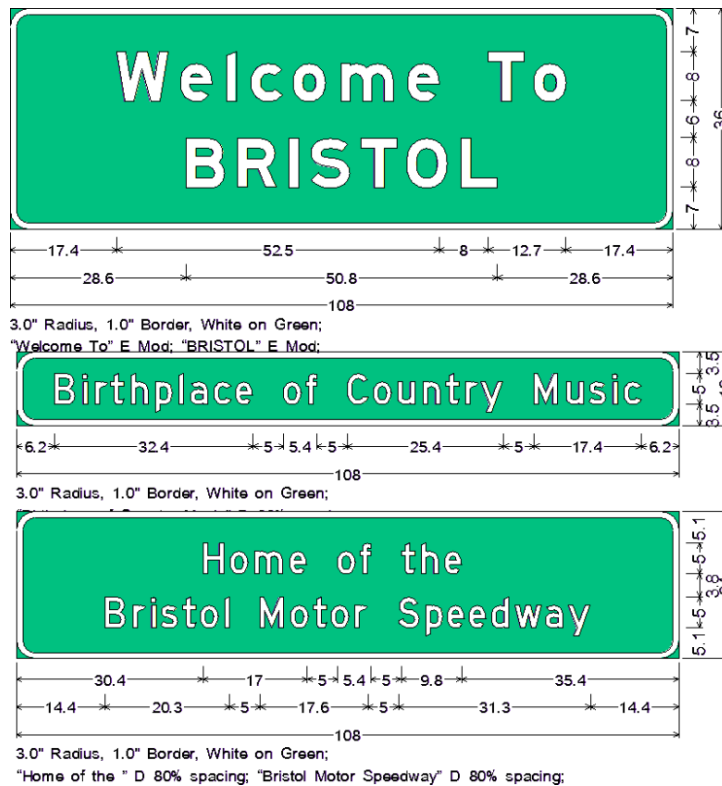
## New or Modified Sign Not at City Limit Boundary or County Line

This location is only allowed when installation is not practical at a city limit boundary or county line.

If the proposed “Welcome To” sign location is not at the boundary line of the municipality or county, then the following design configurations should be followed:

1. The message “City Limit” shall not be included in the text of the main sign or as part of the supplemental panels.
2. If two slogans are used, one of the slogans may be incorporated into the sign and the other slogan will be attached as a supplemental panel, or both slogans can be attached as individual supplemental panels.

Example:



When a slogan panel is requested to be added to an existing “Welcome To” sign, an appropriate engineering study should be conducted to determine if the sign support system requires modification to meet current safety standards. When a new or modified slogan panel is requested, the existing “Welcome To” sign shall be revised or modified to meet the current design standards. If the existing sign is larger than the current standards allow, the sign shall be redesigned to meet the current standards. The width of a new slogan panel shall match the width of the “Welcome To” sign, and the entire installation shall meet design criteria herein.

All costs associated with modifying existing signs and/or supports, including the engineering study, will be the responsibility of the requesting party.

When an optional “Welcome To” sign becomes worn or faded or is damaged (or supports for the sign are damaged), the Department will notify the requester (responsible party) that the sign and/or supports need to be replaced or repaired. The requester will have 90 days to provide full payment to replace or repair the subject sign/supports. If the Department does not receive the requested payment, the Department will cancel the agreement and remove the existing sign. The Regional Traffic Engineer may require the requester to supply the replacement sign. Signs shall meet all TDOT specifications and design requirements herein and attached, as well as sign sheeting standards.

All “Welcome To” signs for full control of access facilities require a sign design from the Traffic Engineering HQ. The Traffic Engineering HQ will provide a sign design for any location upon request.

All “Welcome To” signs shall adhere to the following height requirements:

<b>Text</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Maximum Width of Sign</b>
Welcome To	8” EM	144” or not to exceed the name of city plus the border spacing using 8” E
City Name	8”EM or E	
Slogan	5”D	

Slogan supplemental panels shall not exceed the maximum width of the main sign and a height of 12” per each line of slogan text, with no more than 3 lines total.

All “Welcome To” signs shall meet the following design criteria:

1. Sign and supplemental panels shall have a white message and border on a green background.
2. Sign message and slogan text shall be in standard highway font; (no script or special fonts allowed).
3. Sign shall be fabricated from aluminum.
4. Sign shall be retro-reflective.
5. Sign support systems shall meet all safety requirements.
6. All signs shall be rectangular in shape.
7. Overhead installation of “Welcome To” signs shall not be permitted.
8. The Department has the responsibility and authority to relocate, remove, or deny signs on a highway right-of-way if a need for a higher priority regulatory, warning, or guide sign is identified.

TDOT 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 TDOT or the traveling public, without advance notice. TDOT 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 municipality/community/county may request to upgrade their signs, provided that minimum spacing is available on the upgraded roadway.

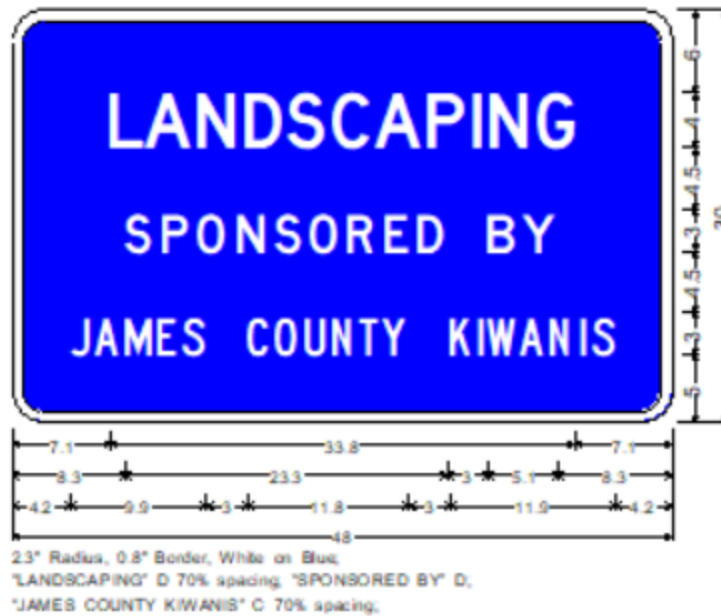
TDOT has the authority to control all signs within the right of way of the State Highway System and may exercise discretion in rejecting any application for a "Welcome To" sign.

Slogans: These guidelines require that a resolution be passed by the appropriate local legislative body for any proposed slogans, and such resolution must specifically state the precise text of the slogans to be used. Such slogans are intended to represent and identify the community at large. Slogans are not intended to promote elected officials, political ideologies, or single individuals. The Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Transportation retains authority to reject any slogan that is deemed inappropriate.

## Appendixes

### Appendix A

Example "Landscaping Acknowledgement" Sign



### Appendix B

Example "Do Not Mow" Sign



## Appendix C

### Gateway Monuments and Transportation Art Example Photos

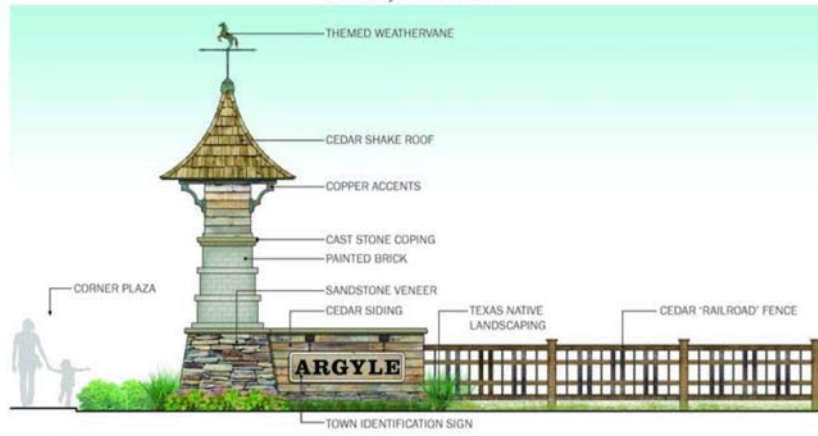






### Primary Monument

### Monument Design



focus **GROUP** | BRIDGE | **BRIDGE** | **BRIDGE** | Team of Argyle, TX - Planning & Marketing System  
December 23, 2010 | 1.00 Rev. 10/23/10 | 1.00 Schematic Design

11

