



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING OFFICE
SUITE 400, JAMES K. POLK BUILDING
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0333

Traffic Operations Memorandum 1401

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 3, 2014

To: Regional Directors
Senior TDOT Engineering Managers
Regional Traffic Engineering Offices
HQ Traffic Operations Staff

From: Michael L. Tugwell – State Traffic Engineer
Joseph V. Sweat – HQ Traffic Engineering Office (signing)

RE: Guidelines for Gateway Monuments and Transportation Art
Guidelines for “Welcome to” signs for controlled access highways

We have attached guidelines for two new signing programs. The Guidelines for Gateway Monuments are to be used along with the Excess Land Committee Process.

The Guidelines for “Welcome To” signs are to be administered by the Regional Traffic Engineering Offices along with the HQ Traffic Operation Division. The cost associated with the each program is to be that of the local government and applicants.

Both of these programs may now be considered active and will be covered during the upcoming Traffic Operations Division Conference later this year.

TDOT Guidelines for Gateway Monuments and Transportation Art by Joseph V. Sweat – TDOT Traffic Operations - Draft date: (6-1-14)

A Gateway Monument is defined as any freestanding structure or sign, non-integral or non-required highway feature that will communicate 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 located off the mainline of a freeway or expressway, in or near off-ramp areas of an interchange exit or along conventional highways. Gateway Monuments will not be allowed at freeway to freeway (major directional) interchanges. Gateway Monuments located at or near freeway or expressway exits shall not be directed toward the mainline of the major highway but rather are intended to be viewed as drivers exit the mainline.

Gateway Monuments may be located on private property or the right-of-way and must be located outside of the safety clear zone. Gateway Monuments located on private property must conform to all outdoor advertising regulations and laws and must be reviewed by TDOT's Highway Beautification staff. These guidelines are intended to be used along with and support the current Excess Land Committee process

Gateway Monuments must be requested and submitted by local government and not a non-governmental entity. If a slogan is proposed then a resolution endorsing the slogan from the local legislative body is required.

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 Gateway Monuments may include text and must be a freestanding structure or sign, not integral to a required highway facility.

Required engineered highway features, such as, 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.

For Gateway Monuments proposed within the ROW of controlled access highways smaller 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.

Maintenance

A Maintenance Agreement for the care and upkeep of said Gateway Monument, or Transportation Art will be established between the Local Government and the Department.

Gateway Monuments and Transportation Art shall be kept clean, free of graffiti, and in good repair. The Local Entity 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 or Transportation Art 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 or Transportation Art itself. Any other maintenance activities anticipated by the Local Entity that are over and above what the Department would normally provide will be documented by Maintenance Agreement.

Removal

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

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

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

Guidelines for the Design and Placement of Gateway Monuments

Proposed Gateway Monuments Shall:

Be freestanding

Be ground mounted (not above any roadway) and not located along the mainline of any freeway or expressway.

May incorporate 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.

Include, if required by the Department, approved protective graffiti coatings.

Be developed to require low or no maintenance to minimize exposure of workers and others to potential risks.

Be appropriate to its proposed setting and community context.

Be in proper size and scale with its surroundings. The maximum size not to exceed an approximate width of 25 feet, a height of 20 feet or a depth of 10 feet.

Be composed of materials that are durable for the projected life span of the project.

Be located well beyond the clear recovery zone, placed such that there will be minimal likelihood of being struck by an errant vehicle, or in a protected location, and have the site specific concurrence of the regional traffic engineering office.

Be located where maintenance can be safely performed.

Conform to all relevant Tennessee Outdoor advertising rules, regulations, laws and all local sign ordinances. The website for outdoor advertising shows the State of Tennessee Rules and Regulations and Laws for Outdoor Advertising follows:

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

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.

1. Proposed Gateway Monuments shall not:

2. Be allowed along 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.)
3. 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.
4. Contain any displays of any sort, advertising, decorative banners, non-governmental flags. (Official City, County, State of U.S. Flags are permitted in limited numbers.)
5. Display telephone numbers, street addresses, or Internet addresses.
6. Interfere with airspace above the roadway.
7. Include reflective or glaring surface finishes.
8. 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.

9. Display blinking or intermittent lights, changeable message signs or any type digital display.
10. Include any type water features.
11. Include moving elements (kinetic art) or simulated movement.
12. Include images of flags.
13. Neither interfere with official traffic control devices nor interfere with the operational right-of-way above the roadway.
14. Be placed within State right-of-way upon trees, or painted or drawn upon rocks or other existing natural features.
15. 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.
16. Restrict sight distance.
17. 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 approval of the Regional Engineer Director.
18. Negatively impact existing highway features, including existing signs, or irrigation systems.
19. Protrude or span over travel lanes or roadbed.

Design Guidelines for Transportation Art

Proposed transportation art must:

1. Be appropriate to its proposed setting.
2. Be in proper scale with its surroundings.
3. 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).
4. Be composed of materials that are durable for the projected life span of the project;
5. Be located where the owners can safely perform required maintenance as specified in the license agreement and in conformance with TDOT' procedures.
6. Be fully funded for design, installation, maintenance, and removal by others for its projected life span.
7. Conform to all relevant Tennessee Outdoor Advertising Rule, Regulations, and Laws.

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

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

8. Not be placed along the main line of a freeway or expressway.
9. Not imitate, obscure, or interfere with traffic control devices.
10. Not interfere with airspace above the roadway.
11. Not be placed within State highway right-of-way up on trees, rocks or other natural features.
12. Not adversely affect existing structures, drainage patterns or storm water runoff quality, landscaping, natural vegetation, or other planting;
13. 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 roadway as is practical, with consideration for the visibility of the art.
14. 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) Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
15. Not include reflective or glaring surface finishes.
16. 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.
17. Not include blinking or intermittent lights.
18. Not include moving elements (kinetic art) or simulate movement.
19. Not restrict sight distance.
20. Not include any form of advertising that would be in conflict with the Outdoor Advertising Act such as a wall or rock displaying an outdoor advertising message or a barn with a painted message will be considered outdoor advertising.
21. Not display text, flags, religious, political, or commercial symbols.
22. Not include commercial symbols.
23. Be designed to minimize ongoing maintenance needs.
24. Be consistent with Structures Division inspection requirements, including:
 - 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 Departments Structure's 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' inspection access to structures, mural art may be placed on removable panels; and
- Chipping, blasting, or in any way modifying existing concrete surfaces is prohibited.

Submittal Requirements of Gateway Monument or Transportation Art Proposals

The local government shall provide the Department professionally prepared plans stamped by an engineer licensed to practice in Tennessee and depicting the following information:

1. Site-specific proposal (Index Sheet, with vicinity map).
2. Dimensions and offsets (right-of-way lines, edge of pavement, center line, and clear recovery zone).
3. Location for placement of the proposed Gateway Monument (topography).
4. Preliminary and proposed Gateway Monument.
5. Discussion of proposed materials, colors, and text.
6. Proposed message to be communicated.

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

A Tennessee licensed engineer shall prepare and stamp final submittals for a Gateway Monument or Transportation Art proposals. 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 (the Department may furnish necessary site data) or both if requested.
4. Construction schedule.
5. Cost estimate.
6. Traffic control plans and provisions if required.
7. Maintenance plan and schedule.
8. Environmental documentation if required by law.

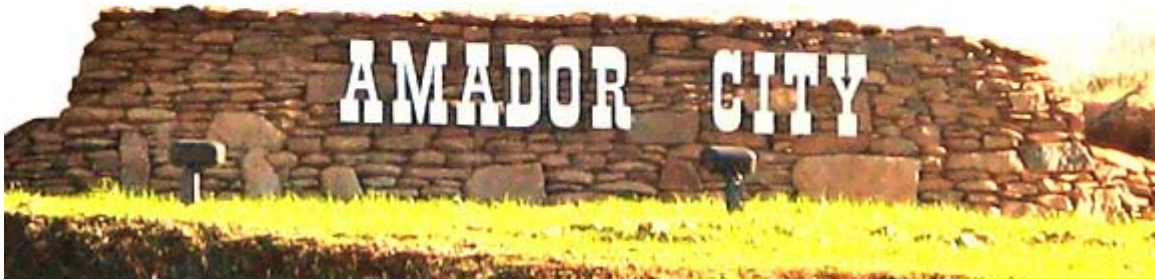
9. Location for placement of the proposed Gateway Monument.
10. Elevations and details clearly illustrating and dimensioning the proposal (the Gateway Monument must be aesthetically pleasing on all visible sides).
11. Proposed access for maintenance purposes.
12. Proposed maintenance plan schedule.
13. Proposed color scheme.
14. Proposed lighting.
15. 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. Applicants should contact regional traffic engineering staff and the regional excess land committee designee to apply under these guidelines.

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.), aesthetics, community support, and maintainability and 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.











**Tennessee Department of Transportation
Traffic Operation Division
Guidelines for Optional “Welcome To” Signs
6-1-2014**

The purpose of this standard practice is to establish guidelines for optional “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 slogan(s) 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 such 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, such 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 also must recognize a maximum installation of three 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 sign 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 sign fabrication and installation once notified by the Department.

“Welcome To” signs shall be erected at the municipal or county boundary limits if possible 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 have no exit nearby are 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 two (2) slogans not to exceed three (3) lines of text and the primary top sign shall not exceed three lines (3) of text not including the “City Limits” or “County Line” message.

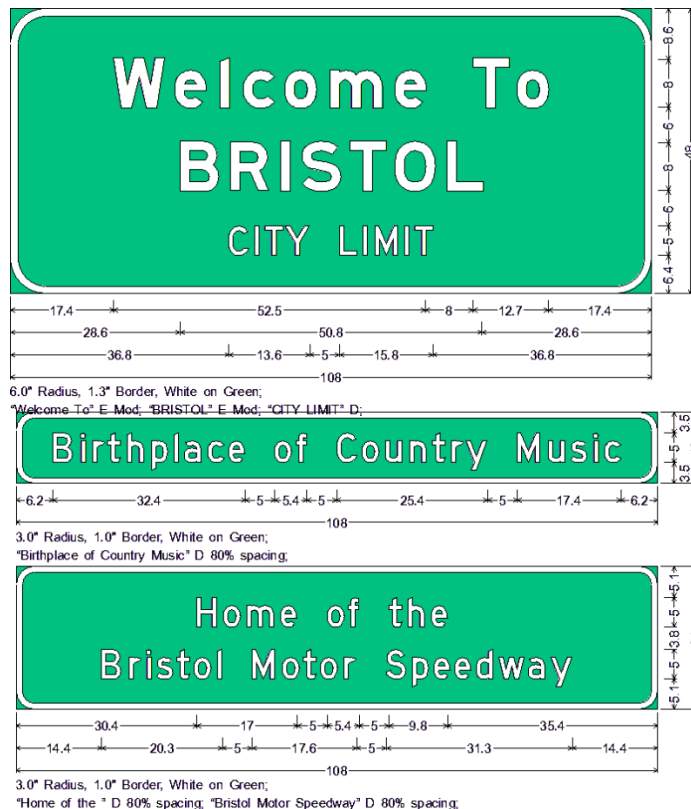
When “Welcome To” city or county signs are installed at the actual city limits or county line then the “City Limits” or “County Line” message shall be within the “Welcome To” (top) sign. The message “City Limit” is not considered in the maximum lines of copy and the two panel maximum applies. The options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

OPTION A: New or Modified Signs at City Limit Boundary (This location is required when it is possible to install sign at 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 three lines of copy and two slogan maximum.)
2. One or two slogans not exceeding a total of three lines of copy in total may be attached as supplemental panels below the main sign.

Example:



OPTION B: New or Modified Sign Not at City Limit or County Line
(This location is only allowed when installation is not practical at city limit boundary):

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.
3. 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(s) 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, 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 needs to be replaced/repared. The requester will have 90 days to provide full payment to replace or repair the subject signs/supports. If the Department does not receive the requested payment, the Department will cancel the agreement and remove the existing sign(s). 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, and 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 meet the following design criteria:

Maximum Width of Sign:	144” or not to exceed name of city plus border spacing using 8” E
Text: Welcome To	(8” EM)
City Name	(8”EM or E)
Slogan	(5”D)

Slogan supplemental panels shall not exceed the maximum width of main sign x 12” for (1) line of slogan text with no more than three (3) lines total.

- 1) Sign and supplemental panel(s) shall have 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; and
- 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 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 the TDOT or the traveling public, without advance notice. The 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”.

- 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.