

2.1 General

Effective signing is the primary method to provide regulatory, warning, and guidance information to transportation system users. Signing that is clear, concise, and accurate supports safe, legal, and orderly travel on public roadways and transportation facilities. Sign use must be limited and conservative since signs can lose their effectiveness when used to excess. Signs are not typically used to confirm Rules of the Road.

This chapter contains information about signing on the state roadway system and is intended for persons involved in traffic operation or design. Specific policies and guidelines are included that clarify the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD) information. Situations not addressed in this chapter or the MUTCD may need to be determined on a case-by-case basis using engineering judgment.

Where a change to the current sign installation is indicated by information in this chapter, replace as the current sign’s service life is reached. MUTCD compliance dates for some replacements are noted where applicable.

State law requires the department to adopt uniform standards for traffic control devices, including signs, along public roadways. WAC 468-95 adopts the MUTCD and Washington State Modifications to the MUTCD M 24-01 as these standards. The MUTCD and WSDOT modifications provide guidance on the intended use and placement of regulatory, warning, guide, and motorist information signs, as well as specific information on sizes and installation. This chapter supplements the MUTCD and WSDOT modifications with specific interpretations and unique applications for signs on the state highway system.

Guidelines for the use of traffic control signs are discussed in the following MUTCD chapters:

MUTCD Location	Sign Type
Chapter 2B	Regulatory Signs, Barricades, and Gates
Chapter 2C	Warning Signs and Object Markers
Chapter 2D	Guide Signs – Conventional Roads
Chapter 2E	Guide Signs – Freeways and Expressways
Chapter 2F	Toll Road Signs
Chapter 2G	Preferential and Managed Lane Signs
Chapter 2H	General Information Signs
Chapter 2I	General Service Signs
Chapter 2J	Specific Service Signs

Chapter 2L	Changeable Message Signs
Chapter 2M	Recreational and Cultural Interest Signs
Chapter 2N	Emergency Management Signs
Part 6	Work Zone Signs
Part 7	School Area Signs
Part 8	Railroad and Light Rail Signs
Part 9	Bicycle Facility Signs

2.2 Sign Design

The WSDOT *Sign Fabrication Manual* M 55-05 contains geometric layout details for most signs used by the department.

The sign number codes indicated in the *Sign Fabrication Manual* and other departmental publications are exclusive to WSDOT and may not correspond to MUTCD number codes for similar signs.

Any modification to a symbol regulatory or warning sign requires FHWA experimentation approval.

(1) Designing a Sign Message

This section contains information about layout and fabrication of signs that are not addressed in the *Sign Fabrication Manual*.

- (a) **Message Content** – A sign message must convey the necessary information in a simple, direct manner using clear and concise wording. English language is used on signs on the state transportation system. Historical names (including non-English) may be used for place names such as for a town or natural or cultural feature.
- (b) **Letter Sizing** – Letter sizes for primary and supplemental guide signs are determined by roadway type and operating speed. A sign message must be large enough to give the viewer adequate time to read and comprehend the information, and to respond with a driving task or other action as required. MUTCD Tables 2E-2 through 2E-5 show the appropriate standard letter sizes to be used. Signs on non-roadway portions of the transportation system (i.e., bicycle or pedestrian paths, transit stations) are sized to reflect the specific conditions of use.

Studies indicate the average driver comprehends three words per second, after a message perception time of up to two seconds. Unique messages require more perception time than messages that are commonly used. Determine the needed letter height for a particular sign by using the following formula that combines the comprehension rate and the perception time with the operational speed of the roadway.

$$\text{LETTER HEIGHT} = (N/3 + 2) f$$

Where: N = Number of words in the message.

f = Legibility factor (see [Table 2-1](#)).

(Found by dividing vehicle speed in feet per second (fps) by 30, the legibility distance per inch of letter height.)

*MPH	(fps)	f
25	37	1.2
30	44	1.5
35	51	1.7
40	59	2.0
45	66	2.2
50	73	2.4
55	81	2.7
60	88	2.9
65	95	3.2
70	103	3.4

*Speed (legal speed limit or 85th percentile speed).

'f' Values by Speed

Table 2-1

The following example applies the formula and calculates desirable letter height:

Example message: "SNOQUALMIE PASS RADIO
TRAFFIC INFO 1 MILE"

Roadway Speed = 65 mph

N = 7

f = 3.2

Height = $(7/3 + 2) 3.2 = 14$ inches

LETTER HEIGHT = Use 14-inch letters

- (c) **Message Layout and Spacing** – Sign message layout and spacing requirements are specified in the [Sign Fabrication Manual](#).
- (d) **Abbreviations** – Abbreviations must be immediately recognizable by the viewer and are only used to avoid excessively long sign messages. Do not use abbreviations if the controlling (longest) message line is long enough to allow use of the complete word. Do not abbreviate place names except for those approved in the list below.

To maintain statewide uniformity, the Headquarters Traffic Office must approve abbreviations other than those listed below. Periods are not used in sign abbreviations, except for British Columbia (B.C.) and United States (U.S. Customs).

The following are the only pre-approved abbreviations:

AFB	Air Force Base
Alt	Alternate
Ave	Avenue
B.C.	British Columbia
Bch	Beach
Blvd	Boulevard
Coll	College
Comm	Community
Co	County
Cr	Creek
Ct	Court
Ctr	Center
DNR	Department of Natural Resources (campground, etc.)
Dr	Drive
E	East
Elev	Elevation
FS	Forest Service
Ft	Fort
Fwy	Freeway
Fy	Ferry
Hist	Historic (as in "Nat'l Hist District")
HOV	High Occupancy Vehicle
Hts	Heights
Hwy	Highway and State Route
Info	Information
Int'l	International
Jct	Junction
km	Kilometers
Lab	Laboratory
Lk	Lake
Ln	Lane
Lp	Loop
Lt	Left
M	Meters
Max	Maximum
Med	Medical
Mi	Mile(s)
Min	Minimum
MPH	Miles Per Hour
Mt	Mount (Rainier)
Mtn	Mountain
N	North
NE	North East
NW	North West
NAS	Naval Air Station
Nat'l	National
Ore	Oregon

ORV	Off Road Vehicle
Ped	Pedestrian
Pkwy	Parkway
Pl	Place
Pop	Population
Pt	Port or Point
Rd	Road
Rec Area	Recreational Area
Res	Reservation
RR	Railroad
Rt	Right
RV	Recreational Vehicle
S	South
SE	South East
SW	South West
Sea-Tac Airport	Seattle-Tacoma Airport
St	Street
Temp	Temporary
Thru	Through
Univ	University
U.S.	U.S. (Customs, etc.)
USA	United States of America
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
W	West
Wy	Way
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation
State Patrol	Washington State Patrol
Xing	Crossing

(2) Reflective Sign Sheeting Material Requirements

Traffic control signs are fabricated using various types of reflective sheeting material. Each sheeting type has different retroreflective properties and different practical applications. The sign type and its location determine the specific sheeting to be used. The following sheeting types are designated in ASTM Specification D 4956:

- **Type I** – Medium-intensity retroreflective sheeting, referred to as “Engineer Grade.” Warranty life of 7 years.
- **Type II** – Medium-high-intensity retroreflective sheeting referred to as “Super Engineer Grade.” Warranty life of 10 to 12 years.
- **Type III** – High-intensity retroreflective sheeting referred to as “High Intensity.” Warranty life of 10 years.
- **Type IV** – High-intensity prismatic retroreflective sheeting, referred to as “High Performance.” Warranty life of 10 years.
- **Type VIII** – Super high-intensity prismatic retroreflective sheeting, referred to as “Super High Performance.” Warranty life of 10 years.

- **Type IX** – Very high-intensity prismatic retroreflective sheeting, referred to as “VIP Diamond Grade” or “Omni-View.” Warranty life of 12 years.
- **Type X** – Super-high-intensity prismatic retroreflective sheeting, referred to as “Fluorescent Orange Prismatic.” Warranty life of 3 years.

The following table shows the specific sheeting type to use, based on the sign type, location, and lighting environment. When ordering a sign from the WSDOT Yakima sign shop, specify the sheeting type.

Sign Type	Roadway Illumination	Sheeting Type (Background)	Sheeting Type (Legend, Symbols, Border)
Regulatory			
• Ground Mounted	N/A	III or IV	N/A ¹
• Overhead	N/A	IV	N/A
Warning			
• Ground Mounted	N/A	III or IV	N/A
• Overhead	N/A	VIII or IX	N/A
Guide Signs			
• Ground Mounted	N/A	II	III or IV
• Overhead Exit Only	Continuous ²	III or IV ³	VIII or IX
• Overhead Exit Only	Non-Continuous – Sign Light Required	II	III or IV
• Overhead Left Side Exits	Sign Light Required	II	III or IV
• Other Overhead Guide	N/A	III or IV	VIII or IX
• Overhead Street Name	N/A	III or IV	IV
Route Markers (M-Series Signs)	N/A	II	III or IV
General Information (I-Series Signs)	N/A	II	III or IV
School (S-Series Signs)⁴ (S1-1, S4-3, “School” portion of S5-1, and S5-101)	N/A	VIII or IX	N/A
Milepost Markers	N/A	II	III or IV
Blue and Brown Background Signs	N/A	II	III or IV
Fluorescent Orange (Work Zone Signs)	N/A	X	N/A

¹Red is Type III or IV, black is non-reflective.

²Continuous Illumination. There is continuous roadway illumination between interchanges.

³For Yellow Background sheeting, use Type VIII or IX Fluorescent sheeting.

⁴Fluorescent Yellow Green (FYG) sheeting.

Table 2-2

2.3 Sign Location, Installation, and Storage

(1) Sign Location

Signs shall be located and positioned according to standards outlined in the [MUTCD](#) Section 2A.16–2A.21, [Design Manual](#) M 22-01 Chapter 1020, and [Standard Plan](#) G-20.10-00. These standards address sign mounting height and lateral and longitudinal placement.

- Signs must be placed to provide a clear view for the roadway user and to not obstruct other signs.
- Signs must be sufficiently spaced to allow the roadway user time for making required decisions and to safely execute any necessary maneuver.
- Overloading roadway users with too much information may cause confusion.
- Signs should be located as far from the traveled way as possible, while remaining visually effective. They should be placed on the backslope of a ditch, rather than the inslope or bottom.

(2) Sign Installation

Signs shall be installed according to standards contained in [Design Manual](#) Chapter 1020, [Standard Plans](#) Section G, and [MUTCD](#) Section 2A.16–2A.21. Refer to these documents for installation standards for:

- Ground mounted signs on steel, wood, and box beam posts.
- Overhead sign installations, including service walkways.
- Height of sign (vertical clearance or “v” dimension).
- Horizontal location of sign (“w” dimension).
- Sign post break-away safety features.
- Windload information is shown at www.wsdot.wa.gov/design/traffic/signing/.

(3) Temporary and Permanent Attention Devices

Attention getting devices, such as flags, may be used temporarily with newly installed warning or regulatory signs. They can draw attention to a traffic revision such as a speed limit change or the addition of a traffic signal. Temporary attention devices are fluorescent yellow in color. They are generally displayed for a minimum of two weeks and a maximum of one month. Devices may be displayed up to two months when greater impact is needed.

Attention devices may be permanently placed only when a high impact continues to be needed to improve compliance with a specific traffic regulation or other traffic control. Permanent attention devices have been used on Interstate or other major roadways where there is a speed limit reduction of 10 mph or greater. Permanent attention devices shall be fluorescent yellow prismatic sheeting and must be approved by the region traffic engineer following an engineering investigation, which includes a review of crash and speed data. The unnecessary

use of attention devices erodes their effectiveness and must be avoided. Therefore, permanent attention devices must be re-evaluated every six to 12 months for continued effectiveness and re-approved by the region traffic engineer.

(4) **Controlling Vegetation Around Signs**

The department's maintenance crews are responsible for maintaining visibility to signs by clearing vegetation that obscures the full view of a sign face. Thoughtful sign placement can reduce the need for vegetation control.

The following guidance will generally provide sign visibility. Greater clearing may be necessary in some situations to achieve full visibility to the sign.

Area Description	Distance*	Width**
Low Speed Urban	200 feet	Varies
Rural	500 feet	Varies
Freeways and All Guide Signs	800 feet	Varies

**Distance* is measured in the direction that the sign faces, along the edge of the traveled way.

***Width* varies. Clear vegetation from edge of pavement to 5 feet beyond the sign edge that is farthest from the roadway, or to the edge of the right of way.

Table 2-3

(5) **Sign Storage**

Signs must be stored properly to prevent damage to the sign face. Sign sheeting is damaged by exposure to dirt and water during storage, which can reduce its retroreflectivity. **Never store signs laying flat. Moisture accumulation between signs will cause sheeting failure.**

Store all packaged signs on edge and indoors. If packaged signs become wet, unpack them immediately and separate the signs to dry (clothespins work well). Provide ample space between signs to allow free air circulation and moisture evaporation from each sign face.

If outdoor storage is required for short periods, remove all packing materials so nothing is against the sign face. Store signs on edge, separated with clothespins, and set above the ground in a clean area.

2.4 Sign Installation and Maintenance Jurisdiction

Jurisdictional responsibility for traffic control signs (and other traffic control devices) on public highways is assigned through several state statutes.

- The department is responsible for erecting and maintaining traffic control signs upon every state highway ([RCW 47.36.050](#)). Local jurisdictions are assigned the responsibility to erect and maintain traffic control signs on roadways within their jurisdiction ([RCW 47.36.060](#)).

These responsibilities are further defined:

- On limited access roadways, including any interchange cross-streets, the department is responsible for signing ([RCW 47.52.020](#) and [RCW 47.24.020\(2\)](#)). This can be superseded by an agreement with a local agency that designates other responsibility arrangements ([RCW 47.52.090](#)).
- Responsibility for signing along city streets that are part of the state highway system is assigned based on the population of the city ([RCW 47.24.020\(12\)](#) and (13)) and is shown in [Table 2-4](#). Population is determined by the Washington State Office of Fiscal Management and can be found at www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/april1/finalpop.pdf.

It is important to work with each city to ensure that city signs are not installed on department sign posts and that adequate sign spacing is maintained. The only exception is for STREET NAME signs above a STOP sign.

Sign Type	Responsibility Based on City Population	
	Over 25,000	Under 25,000
Regulatory	City	State
Parking	City	City
Warning	City	State
Route Markers	State	State
Primary Guide Signs	State	State
Street Name	City	City
School	City	State
MIS Logo	City	City*
Informational	City	City
DUI Victim Memorial	City	City

*The department may install these signs, if authorized through a specific agreement with a city or town.

**Sign Installation and Maintenance Responsibility
Non-Limited Access Highways
Table 2-4**

2.5 Traffic Sign Management System (TSMS)

TSMS is a statewide sign inventory computer program that provides both a complete inventory and a history of maintenance actions for each sign on the state highway system.

The Headquarters and region Traffic Offices use TSMS to provide accurate records regarding:

- Sign location.
- Original installation and replacement dates.

- Sign message.
- Sign size.
- Letter height.
- Direction of sign face.
- Sheeting type and color.
- Maintenance history.

The region Traffic Offices are responsible for keeping the TSMS up to date including:

- Entering new sign data.
- Collecting the Sign Activity Reports (SAR) from region maintenance personnel and inputting that data to keep the TSMS current and factual.
- Conducting periodic field inventories.
- Inventorying all signs installed by contract.
- Updating inventory after construction projects are completed.
- Night reflectivity review.

The region maintenance personnel are responsible for filling out a Sign Activity Report (SAR) that details each activity performed. This provides important history and identifies needed maintenance actions. The SAR is sent to the region Traffic Office for input into the TSMS. In some regions, maintenance personnel input SAR data in cooperation with the region Traffic Office

Regions also provide TSMS reports to Traffic, Maintenance, or other offices as requested.

The Headquarters Traffic Operations Office is responsible for maintaining and updating the TSMS program to meet the department's business needs, including data storage and selective retrieval of sign inventory and maintenance activity data.

2.6 State Traffic Laws and Regulations Requiring a Sign for Enforcement

Some Rules of the Road ([RCW 46.61](#)) are not enforceable unless appropriate signs are posted. The following signs must be installed to enforce a regulation (RCW). Place these signs at the point of regulation or where the prohibition begins and ends.

Sign Message	Sign Number	RCW
STOP & YIELD	R1-1 & R1-2	47.36.110
SPEED LIMIT	R2-1	46.61.405
SPEED LIMIT, TRUCKS	R2-2	46.61.410
MINIMUM SPEED LIMIT	R2-4	46.61.425
HOV FACILITIES	R3-10, 11, 12, 13	46.61.165
BICYCLES MUST EXIT	R5-601	46.61.160
NO MOTORIZED FOOT SCOOTERS	R5-1003 & R5-1004	46.61.710
PARKING RESTRICTIONS	R7 SERIES	46.61.575
RESERVED PARKING FOR DISABLED PERSONS	R7-801	46.61.581
NO STOPPING RESTRICTIONS	R8 SERIES	46.61.570
NO HITCHHIKING	R9-4 & R9-4A	46.61.255
PEDESTRIAN PROHIBITION	R5 SERIES	WAC 468-58-030
WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS, etc.	R12 SERIES	46.61.450
SCHOOL SPEED LIMIT	S5-1	46.61.440
RANGE AREA	I2-401 & I2-501	16.24.060
LIMITED ACCESS	I2-601 & I2-701	47.52.110
HITCHHIKING PERMITTED	I7-901	46.61.255
SLOW VEHICLES MAY USE SHLDER	I8-501	46.61.428

Signs Needed for Enforcement

Table 2-5

2.7 Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs alert transportation system users to applicable traffic laws or regulations, and provide information and instructions required for compliance. Regulatory signs, whose installation is required for enforcement of a law, are listed in [Section 2.6](#).

(1) Stop Signs

The department shall install and maintain all STOP (R1-1) signs at the intersections of county roads with state highways ([RCW 47.36.100](#)). The department shall install and maintain all STOP signs at the intersections of city streets with state highways within the corporate limits of cities having populations less than 25,000 ([RCW 47.24.020\(13\)](#)).

STOP signs shall be a minimum 36 x 36 inches on all roadways. A 48 x 48 inch sign may be used on divided highways with at-grade intersections or where otherwise indicated by a traffic and engineering study. On low-volume roads (under 400 ADT), a 30-inch STOP sign may be used.

(2) Yield Signs

YIELD (R1-2) signs are installed to assign right of way to traffic on certain approaches to an intersection. In addition to guidance in the [MUTCD](#), YIELD signs are installed as follows:

- They shall be installed to assign right of way at the entrance to a roundabout intersection per the [MUTCD](#).
- They should be installed along freeway or expressway on-ramps where acceleration ramp geometry and/or sight distance do not meet [Design Manual](#) minimum standards. Install the Yield sign so that it is primarily visible only to ramp traffic.
- They may be installed at entrances to ramp and standard intersection right turn islands.

Use the tables in [Design Manual](#) Chapter 1360 to determine the appropriate minimum length for the acceleration lane portion of an on-ramp.

(3) Speed Limit Signs

SPEED LIMIT (R2-1) signs are installed to display the maximum allowable vehicle speed as established by law or regulation. Install a TRUCKS XX (R2-2) sign below the standard speed limit sign where a special speed limit is mandated for trucks over 10,000 pounds gross weight, or vehicles in combination, or where the maximum speed limit for cars and trucks is different.

Speed limit signs are prominently located for maximum awareness at the following locations:

- At the point of change from one speed limit to another.
- On the far side of major interchanges or intersections, including between state highways.
- At entrances to Washington State and at boundaries of cities and towns.
- In rural areas, at 10- to 20-mile intervals.

On **conventional roadways**, locate a sign for each direction of travel, opposite one another at the speed zone boundary. If existing features prohibit opposite installation, the signs may be offset up to 150 feet in either direction from the speed zone boundary and located a maximum of 300 feet apart. If the signs cannot be installed within these parameters, the speed zone boundary may be changed by the State Traffic Engineer to accommodate sign installation.

On **multilane divided highways**, install signs on both the right and left sides of the roadway at speed zone boundaries. Confirmation speed limit signs may be installed on the right side only.

On **freeways**, install signs a minimum of 1,500 feet beyond on-ramp acceleration lanes ([MUTCD](#) Section 2E-38). Where interchange ramps are closely spaced, conduct a traffic engineering analysis to determine the most effective intervals for posting speed limit signs.

Do not place a speed limit sign between a CURVE or TURN warning sign and the roadway curve or turn itself. Adjust the speed limit boundary location if necessary, to avoid this placement.

See [Appendix 2-1](#) for typical Speed Limit sign layout. See [Section 2.08\(4\)](#) for use of the SPEED REDUCTION (W3-5) warning sign.

See [Chapter 6](#) for information on setting permanent speed limits and [Chapter 5](#) for guidelines on temporary construction zone speed limits.

(4) U-Turns

U-Turns are allowed at some roadway intersections, both inside and outside of cities and towns. Signing may be installed to designate where U-turns are allowed and that the side street must yield to the U-turn movement. [Appendix 2-2](#) shows typical U-turn signing associated with left turn lanes at signalized intersections.

(5) U-Turn Prohibition

The [MUTCD](#) states that TURN PROHIBITION signs (R3-1 through R3-4, R3-18) shall be installed where U-turns are prohibited. U-turns are allowed where the maneuver can be made safely, without interfering with other traffic, and at least 500 feet from a horizontal or vertical curve ([RCW 46.61.295](#)).

On limited access roadways, with median sections, restricted U-turn locations are installed for use by law enforcement, maintenance, and emergency vehicles only ([RCW 47.52.120](#)). Sign these median locations with a NO U-TURN (R3-4) sign.

(6) Two-Way Left Turn Lane

TWO-WAY LEFT TURN ONLY signs may be installed where a lane in the center of a highway is reserved for the use of left-turning vehicles (in either direction) and is not used for passing or overtaking. The post-mounted (R3-9a or R3-9b) or the overhead mounted (R3-9) sign may be used to supplement two-way left turn lane pavement markings. A plaque indicating BEGIN or END may be mounted above either sign to identify the limits of the two-way left turn area.

Additional WSDOT criteria apply to the use of two-way left turn lane signs:

- Install the initial sign near the beginning of the two-way left turn lane and repeat installation as necessary, based on an analysis of operating conditions.
- BEGIN or END plaques are not installed where a two-way left turn lane is interrupted by left turn channelization on either one or both intersection approaches.

(7) Auxiliary Climbing and Passing Lanes

For sections of state highway that include auxiliary climbing lanes:

- Install a TRUCK LANE XXX FEET (R4-6) sign in advance of the climbing lane.

- Install a SLOWER TRAFFIC KEEP RIGHT (R4-3) sign near the beginning of the climbing lane.
- Install a RIGHT LANE ENDS (W9-1R) in advance of the climbing lane terminus, where spacing allows.
- Install a LANE ENDS (W4-2L) sign in advance of the climbing lane terminus. A distance plaque may be installed as a supplement to this sign.

See [Appendix 2-3](#) for signing layout.

For sections of state highway that include auxiliary passing lanes:

- Install a PASSING LANE XXX MILES (R4-601) sign $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in advance of the passing lane. Show the approximate distance to the passing lane, measured to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ mile.
- Install a KEEP RIGHT EXCEPT TO PASS (R4-301) sign at the beginning of the passing lane.
- Install a RIGHT LANE ENDS (W9-1R) sign in advance of the passing lane terminus, where spacing allows.
- Install a LANE ENDS (W4-2L) sign in advance of the passing lane terminus. A distance plaque may be installed as a supplement to this sign.
- An optional NEXT PASSING LANE XXX MILES (R4-602) sign may be installed up to 500 feet beyond the passing lane terminus to show the approximate distance to the next passing lane.

See [Appendix 2-4](#) for signing layout.

(8) Keep Right Except to Pass

The KEEP RIGHT EXCEPT TO PASS sign (R4-301) may be used on multi-lane roadways to remind motorists of state law [RCW 46.61.100](#) which requires vehicles to stay in the right lane of multilane roadways, except to pass. The sign has also been installed at the request of law enforcement agencies to aid their enforcement efforts at specific locations.

Use the following criteria when determining sign locations:

- The preferred sign location is in the median.
- Signs are not to be placed within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in advance of an interchange.
- Signs are not to be placed through an interchange area.
- Signs are not to be placed within 5 miles of each other in the same direction of travel.

(9) Vehicles Over 10,000 lbs. Prohibited in Left Lane

VEHICLES OVER 10,000 LBS. PROHIBITED IN LEFT LANE (R4-302) signs shall be installed on multilane roadways with three or more lanes in one travel direction to remind large vehicles that they are prohibited from travel in the left lane per [RCW 46.61.100\(3\)](#) and [WAC 468-510-020](#).

(10) Do Not Enter and Wrong Way Signing

DO NOT ENTER (R5-1) signs shall be installed at every location where traffic is prohibited from entering a restricted roadway. ONE WAY (R6-1) signs are to be installed above DO NOT ENTER signs. Install WRONG WAY (R5-1a) signs as a supplement to the DO NOT ENTER signs at each location. WRONG WAY signs are placed further from the crossroad than the DO NOT ENTER sign.

Complete WRONG WAY signing for freeway at-grade intersections, interchange ramps, and roundabouts shall be installed as shown in [Appendices 2-5, 2-6](#) and [2-7](#).

(11) Bicycle and Motorized Foot Scooters Prohibition

As part of vehicular traffic, bicycles are permitted on all state highways except where restricted by regulation ([RCW 46.61.160](#) and [WAC 468-58-050](#)). Additionally, “*motorized foot scooters may have access to highways of the state to the same extent as bicycles*” ([RCW 46.61.710\(5\)](#)); thus, they are also restricted in the same areas as bicycles. Restrictions are located primarily on limited access freeways, but may be determined for other locations based on an engineering investigation. They are noted at www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/closed.htm.

Install advance signing to inform bicyclists and motorized foot scooter riders of the upcoming restricted section, and to give alternate route directions.

- On the mainline, install a BICYCLES AND MOTORIZED FOOT SCOOTERS MUST EXIT 1/4 MILE (R5-602) sign in advance of the prohibited area.
- Install a BICYCLE AND MOTORIZED FOOT SCOOTERS MUST EXIT (R5-601 with arrow) sign at the closest off-ramp or intersection in advance of the restricted segment.
- Install a BICYCLES AND MOTORIZED FOOT SCOOTERS PROHIBITED (R5-1003) sign at a prohibition point such as an on-ramp to a prohibited freeway segment.
- Install PEDESTRIANS, HITCHHIKERS, BICYCLES, AND MOTORIZED FOOT SCOOTERS PROHIBITED (R5-1004) sign at on-ramp entrances to prohibited areas.

(12) No Pedestrian Crossing

NO PEDESTRIAN CROSSING signing (R9-3 or R9-3A) may be installed at a signalized intersection or other locations, based on engineering judgment, where pedestrian crossing is prohibited. Locate the sign so that it is visible to all pedestrians who may consider crossing, normally on the opposite side of the roadway in line with the travel path of the pedestrian. The supplemental sign USE CROSSWALK (R9-3B R or L) may be installed below.

(13) Pedestrian Prohibition

Install a PEDESTRIANS PROHIBITED sign (R5-10 series) at access points to limited access highways where pedestrians are prohibited by a department regulation ([WAC 468-58-050](#)).

(14) Shoulder Driving

Shoulder driving is permitted on selected portions of two-lane highways ([RCW 46.61.428](#)). [Chapter 7, Section 7.14](#), of this manual defines the roadway characteristics required to designate a shoulder driving area. Identify designated shoulder driving areas by installing signs to inform vehicular traffic of the permitted action.

- Install a SLOW VEHICLES MAY USE SHOULDER (I8-501) sign at the beginning of the shoulder driving zone.
- Supplement with a NEXT XXX MILES (I7-702) advisory distance plaque and a DAYLIGHT HOURS ONLY (I8-701) sign.
- Repeat this signing as appropriate at a maximum interval of 5 miles.
- Install an END SHOULDER DRIVING (I8-601) sign at the end of the designated shoulder driving zone.

See [Appendix 2-8](#).

(15) Slow Vehicle Turnouts

Slow vehicle turnouts provide passing opportunities along state roadways and are identified by specific signing to inform motorists of the turnout location:

- Install a SLOW VEHICLES USE TURNOUTS NEXT XXX MILES (I8-101) sign where turn-outs occur at several consecutive locations. Place in advance of the initial turnout.
- Install the DELAY OF 5 VEHICLES ILLEGAL (I8-201) sign in advance of each turnout.
- Install the SLOW VEHICLE TURNOUT XXX FT/MILE (I8-401) sign in advance of each turnout.
- Install a SLOW VEHICLE TURNOUT “arrow” (I8-301) sign at the beginning of each turnout.
- NO PARKING (R8-3) or NO PARKING SYMBOL (R8-3A) signs may be installed within the turnout area.

See [Appendix 2-9](#).

(16) Range Area

A RANGE AREA sign (I2-401) shall be installed wherever a state highway enters an open range area, as determined by the local county government ([RCW 16.24.060](#)). Repeat signing at points designated by the governing county

commissioners and install signs at county boundaries if the range area spans adjoining counties. Some county websites list the designated range areas within their county.

Install the LEAVING RANGE AREA (I2-501) sign where a state highway leaves an open range area.

(17) Unmuffled Compression Brakes

It is against the law to use **unmuffled** compression brakes ([RCW 46.37.395](#)). The department installs signs (R4-605) at border crossings, just inside state boundaries and along the ramps to or from weigh stations to inform drivers of this regulation.

Use these guidelines to determine spacing between this and other roadway signing:

- On freeway installations, use a minimum spacing of 500 feet.
- On multilane high speed roadways with at grade intersections, use a minimum spacing of 400 feet.
- On two-lane, high-speed roadways, use a minimum spacing of 300 feet.
- On multilane and two-lane, low speed facilities within incorporated areas, use a minimum spacing of 150 feet.

The department will not install these signs on non-access controlled highways within incorporated areas. The local agency may install and maintain such signing.

(18) Compression Brake Prohibition

Signs prohibiting compression brake use may be installed only where a local agency ordinance prohibiting their use has been adopted ([RCW 70.107.060\(3\)](#)) and where sign spacing is available. The local agency must agree to pay the fabrication, installation, and subsequent maintenance costs.

Install signs (R4-604) before the restricted area as follows:

- On limited access routes, install sign beyond major interchanges.
Locate between the route marker assembly and the speed limit signs.
Where sign space is limited, install below the city entrance marker.
- Along non-access controlled routes outside corporate limits, install signs upon leaving corporate limits, and beyond the junction of major intersections, not to exceed one sign every 5 miles.
- Along non-access controlled city streets that are also state highways, the local agency may work with the department to install signs about the prohibition.

Note: Compression brake regulations are noise regulations rather than traffic regulations. The department does not regulate compression brake use.

2.8 Warning Signs

Warning signs are installed to alert roadway users to unexpected conditions on or adjacent to the roadway that require special attention and that may require a reduction in speed or other action to maintain safe vehicle operation.

Determine the appropriate placement of warning signs based on the [MUTCD Guidelines for Advanced Placement of Warning Signs, Table 2C-4](#), and on an engineering and traffic investigation. The guidelines provide minimum advance placement distances, based on vehicle speeds and location specific conditions.

Warning signs are installed on both sides of the road on multilane divided roadways that have two or more lanes in one direction. Speed limit signs should never be located between any warning sign and the condition warned for, when the warning sign indicates a need to reduce speed.

Yellow is the standard background color for warning signs. Fluorescent yellow/green (FYG) may be used for bicycle, pedestrian, or playground signs where there are an unusual number of conflicts or where strong attention must be drawn to the sign because of distracting surroundings.

Minimum Warning Sign Sizes	
Roadway Type	Minimum Sign Size
Freeways and Expressways	48" x 48"
Multilane and Conventional Roadways	36" x 36"

(1) *Turn and Curve (Horizontal Alignment) Signs and Advisory Speed Plaques*

TURN and CURVE signs are installed to alert motorists to horizontal curvature in the roadway alignment. Advisory speed plaques supplement the signs as determined by a traffic and engineering study (generally using a ball banking instrument to provide readings as the study vehicle traverses each curve). WSDOT has adopted the following application when determining curve and advisory speed signing installations:

Advisory Speed (mph)	Maximum Ball Bank Reading
20 mph or less	14
25 and 30 mph	12
35 mph and greater	10

The TURN (W1-1) sign is used where the engineering and traffic investigation indicates the advisory speed for a horizontal turn to be 30 mph or less.

The CURVE (W1-2) sign is used where the engineering and traffic investigation indicates the advisory speed for a horizontal curve to be from 35 mph to 65 mph.

Install the appropriate TURN or CURVE sign where the recommended curve speed is 5 MPH or more below the posted speed limit.

Install a supplemental ADVISORY SPEED PLAQUE (W13-1) below the TURN or CURVE sign if the advisory speed is 5 mph or more below the posted speed limit, or if an engineering and traffic investigation indicates the need for the sign.

If a supplemental DISTANCE PLAQUE is used, such as beneath a WINDING ROAD (W1-5L/R) sign, show the distance as a fraction of a mile rather than a decimal ($\frac{1}{2}$ **mile** rather than **.5 mile**). The fraction is more quickly read and easily understood by the motorists.

(2) Hairpin Curve

Install a HAIRPIN CURVE sign (W1-901L/R) where the change in the roadway horizontal alignment is 135 degrees or more, and:

- A traffic engineering analysis of roadway, geometric, and operating conditions shows the recommended curve speed to be 30 mph or less.
- The recommended curve speed is equal to or less than the posted speed limit.

Install a supplemental advisory speed plaque (W13-1) below the HAIRPIN CURVE sign if an engineering and traffic investigation indicates the need for the sign. A large arrow sign (W1-6) or chevron alignment signs (W1-8) should be used in conjunction with the hairpin curve sign.

(3) Chevron Alignment

CHEVRON ALIGNMENT (W1-8) signs are used to provide emphasis and guidance for a change in horizontal road alignment. When the curve advisory speed is 15 mph or more below the speed limit, CHEVRONS shall be installed. Refer to [MUTCD Table 2C-5](#) for additional guidance.

If used, CHEVRONS shall be installed on the outside of a turn or curve, in line with and at approximately a right angle to approaching traffic. Install a minimum of three signs in a series, with at least two signs visible to the motorist at all times throughout the curve.

They should be installed on circular interchange ramps, or on other curving alignments where run off the road crashes have demonstrated an operational deficiency.

(4) Speed Limit Reduction Ahead

The SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION AHEAD (W3-5) warning sign has replaced the black on white “SPEED LIMIT AHEAD XX” regulatory sign. The SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION AHEAD sign is installed at locations where the speed limit reduces by 10mph or greater. On multilane divided roadways, install a SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION AHEAD sign on both the left and right sides. Locate the sign to allow sufficient distance to safely slow the vehicle to the reduced speed as shown in [Table 2-6](#).

		Approach Speed Limit (mph)								
		70	65	60	55	50	45	40	35	30
Reduced Speed Limit (mph)	65	430								
	60	720	390							
	55	1000	660	350						
	50	1250	910	600	310					
	45	1470	1140	820	540	270				
	40	1670	1340	1030	740	470	230			
	35	1850	1520	1200	920	650	410	200		
	30	2000	1670	1360	1070	810	570	350	160	
	25	2140	1800	1490	1200	940	700	480	290	120
	20	2240	1910	1600	1310	1040	800	590	390	230

Speed Reduction Signs Advance Location
Table 2-6

(5) Truck Tipping

The TRUCK ROLLOVER (W1-13) sign may be installed in advance of a horizontal curve where there is a history of truck tipping crashes, a Ball Bank indication of 12 degrees or more, or a side friction factor of $f > 0.21^*$. Display the recommended speed on an ADVISORY SPEED PLAQUE (W13-1) below the TRUCK ROLLOVER sign. Install the TRUCK ROLLOVER sign in addition to standard CURVE, TURN, LARGE ARROW, and/or CHEVRON warning signs.

*Use the following formula for a third method to determine the truck speed of a curve:

$$V^2 = 15 R (e + f)$$

Where:

V = Speed in miles per hour

R = Radius curve in feet

e = Rate of super-elevation in feet per foot

f = > 0.21 (Safe coefficient of side friction)

(6) Low Clearance

LOW CLEARANCE (W12-301) warning signs shall be installed where there is 15'3" or less of vertical clearance between the roadway surface and an overhead obstruction such as an overpass.

The maximum legal vehicle height permitted on state highways is 14 feet ([RCW 46.44.020](#)). At the direction of the [MUTCD](#), and through operational experience, a 15-inch buffer (which includes 3 inches for frost heave) has been added to the 14-foot maximum legal height, setting the minimum LOW CLEARANCE signing threshold at 15'3". [Appendix 2-10](#) shows signing details.

Install LOW CLEARANCE signing in the following situations:

- (a) At locations where the clearance is **14 feet or greater but less than 15'3"**, install the following:
 - The LOW CLEARANCE (W12-301) or the LOW CLEARANCE w/ARROW (W12-302) at the low point on the structure.
 - The advance LOW CLEARANCE (W12-2) sign on the right shoulder.
 - Display the clearance height to the nearest inch, but not exceeding the actual clearance.
- (b) At locations where the clearance on any portion of the structure is **less than 14 feet**:
 - Install the LOW CLEARANCE (W12-301) or LOW CLEARANCE w/ARROW (W12-302) sign at the low point on the structure. Where the clearance varies, such as at arched structures or tunnels, additional signs may be used to provide effective clearance information.
 - Install the LOW CLEARANCE (W12-2) sign in advance of the closest intersecting road that provides a detour around the low clearance obstruction. Supplement with an ADVISORY DISTANCE (W13-501) plaque, showing the distance to the obstruction.
 - Install an additional advance LOW CLEARANCE (W12-2) sign before the obstruction, in accordance with [MUTCD](#) Table 2C-4 (Advanced Placement of Warning Signs).
 - Display the clearance height to the nearest inch, but not exceeding the actual clearance.

Roadway reconstruction or surface overlays can reduce the overhead clearance. When a project is completed, region personnel must measure the revised clearance and change the sign message accordingly.

Vertical clearance for all overhead signs shall be in accordance with [Design Manual](#) Chapter 1020.

(7) Stop Ahead/Signal Ahead

Install a STOP AHEAD (W3-1A) sign if the stop sign is not visible for at least the minimum distance indicated in [MUTCD](#) Table 2C-4 (Advanced Placement of Warning Signs). Install a SIGNAL AHEAD (W3-3) sign if the traffic signal is not visible for at least the minimum distance indicated in [MUTCD](#) Table 4D-2 (Minimum Sight Distance for Signal Visibility). On county or city road approaches to state highways, the county or city is responsible for installation and maintenance of these signs.

(8) Signal Ahead Sign With Flashing Beacons

Install a SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION WARNING (SIW) sign assembly to warn motorists of the signal installation when:

- The operating speed is 55 mph or above; and
- The intersection is more than 2 miles away from the adjacent signalized intersection; or
- The visibility requirements to the signal in Table 4D-2 of the [MUTCD](#) cannot be met.

The recommended SIW sign assembly consists of:

- A modified 48" x 48" W3-3 sign on an optional black back plate for added target value.
- Two 8-inch LED yellow beacons.
- A flasher circuit activated continuously by a separate circuit from the service.
- A lighting circuit.

Locate the sign per the [MUTCD](#) Table 2C-4.

The use of a PREPARE TO STOP WHEN FLASHING (PTSWF) system may also be considered. If used, region Traffic Offices shall follow the *Prepare to Stop When Flashing (PTSWF) Systems Pilot Project Interim Guidelines* white paper dated August 10, 2006. The white paper is available from Headquarters Traffic Operations or at www.wsdot.wa.gov/design/traffic.

(9) Merge

Install the MERGE (W4-1) sign to warn mainline motorists of upcoming merging movements, where sight distance to the merge point is less than [MUTCD](#) Table 2C-4 (Advanced Placement of Warning Signs) Condition A. Locate the sign on the major alignment in advance of the point where two roads converge. An additional MERGE sign may be placed on the entering roadway, particularly where acceleration ramp geometry and/or sight distance do not meet [Design Manual](#) minimum standards. Do not use this sign where roads converge with added lanes and no merging movement is required.

(10) Added Lane

An ADDED LANE (W4-3) sign is used in advance of a point where two roadways converge, but merging movements are not required. The sign should be used at all added lane conditions to eliminate unnecessary mainline lane changes. Install the sign so it is visible from both roadways, if possible. Otherwise, install an ADDED LANE sign on each roadway.

(11) Lane Ends

Install a LANE ENDS (W4-2) sign:

- To warn of a reduction in the number of same direction traffic lanes on a multilane highway.
- To emphasize that a parallel on-connection is ending, as shown in *Standard Plan* M-1.80-02.
- In advance of the downstream end of an extra lane provided for slower vehicles.

The LANE ENDS sign shall not be used in drop-lane situations.

(12) Exit Advisory Speed

Install the EXIT ADVISORY SPEED (W13-2) sign at freeway/expressway exit ramps to inform motorists of the recommended exit speed. Locate the sign along the right shoulder of the deceleration lane prior to the exit gore, at a point that allows time for the motorist to make a safe slowing and exiting maneuver. Exit speed is determined by an engineering and traffic study.

In some locations, a CURVE sign is warranted beyond the exit gore. Install standard curve advisory signs in accordance with *MUTCD* Table 2C-4 as space allows. Otherwise, consider the advisory speeds for the entire ramp when determining the speed to put on the exit speed sign.

(13) Ramp Advisory Speed

Install a RAMP ADVISORY SPEED (W13-3) sign to inform motorists of the recommended speed for traversing a ramp alignment with curvature or other unexpected conditions. Use this sign where needed on freeway/expressway entrance ramps, and freeway/expressway to freeway/expressway connection ramps. Locate signs in accordance with *MUTCD* Table 2C-4. Ramp speed is determined by an engineering and traffic study.

In addition, if an advisory speed condition is located well beyond the gore or ramp entrance from surface streets, install a standard TURN or CURVE sign with an advisory speed plaque (W13-1) in accordance with *MUTCD* Table 2C-4 as space allows. Otherwise, consider the advisory speeds for the entire ramp when determining the speed to put on the ramp advisory sign.

(14) Intersection Warning

The INTERSECTION WARNING (W2 Series) sign indicates the presence of an intersection and the possibility of turning or entering traffic. Consider installing this sign where the side road approach is not continuously visible to mainline traffic for a minimum distance as shown in *MUTCD* Table 2C-4 and where any of the following conditions exist:

- The intersection is not channelized.
- Left-turning vehicles may queue in the traveled lane.
- Approach to the intersection does not provide adequate stopping sight distance.

Do not use INTERSECTION WARNING signs on approaches controlled by STOP or YIELD signs, signals, or at channelized intersections.

INTERSECTION WARNING signs may be modified to show offset intersection geometrics or approach curves. The relative importance of the roadways may be shown by varying the line widths used.

As guidance to motorists, the INTERSECTION WARNING sign shall be supplemented with the black on yellow ROAD NAME (D3-201) sign. The road name should be upper/lower case letters. Refer to the MUTCD Section 8B.06, for installation criteria for railroad/intersection signs, W10-2, W10-3, and W10-4.

(15) Roundabout Ahead

ROUNDABOUT AHEAD (W2-6) signs shall be installed in advance of any roundabout established on a state highway and be supplemented with the ROUNDABOUT plaque (W2-6P) and SPEED ADVISORY (W13-1) plaque.

(16) Tunnel Ahead

A TUNNEL AHEAD (W14-501) sign should be installed in advance of any tunnel that has an obscured entrance, is not illuminated, or does not have full shoulder width. A TUNNELS AHEAD sign may be used to address a series of tunnels.

(17) Vehicular Traffic Signs

Vehicular traffic signs may be used to alert roadway users to locations where entering traffic would be unexpected or where sight distance to traffic ahead is restricted.

- (a) **Bicycle** – A BICYCLE SYMBOL (W11-1) may be used to alert road users to locations where there is restricted sight distance or where unexpected entries into the roadway by bicyclists may occur, such as at bicycle path crossings. It may also be considered where there are bicycle/car conflicts. Use Fluorescent yellow green sheeting as the background color in areas where extra attention must be drawn to the crossing, such as urban areas with many distractions.
- (b) **Bikes on Road** – The BICYCLE SYMBOL sign (W11-1) may be used with the BIKES ON ROAD plaque (W11-101) to alert motorists to narrow shouldered roadway sections where bicyclists may be in the lanes. Use a mileage plaque to inform motorists of the distance they can expect to encounter bicyclists in the traveled lane. Do not install these signs on highways that have designated bicycle lanes.

Consider using these signs on sections of state highway where the paved shoulder width is less than 4 feet and one or more of the following conditions are met:

- Average Daily Traffic volume is greater than 1,700 vehicles, based on the most current WSDOT Annual Traffic Report.

- The state highway is part of a recreational or commuter bicycle route that is officially recognized by the department, or a county or regional transportation organization, such as an Regional Transportation Planning Organization or Municipal Planning Organization.

Install the BICYCLE sign with BIKES ON ROAD plaque in advance of or within the first 300 feet of the narrow shoulder area. If the narrow shoulder distance is between 3 and 8 miles, a reminder sign should be placed at mid-point. If the mileage distance exceeds eight miles, reminder signs should be placed at 5-mile spacing.

These signs can be modified to say “BIKES ON BRIDGE” and installed at bridge locations where there is inadequate shoulder (less than 4 feet) for bicyclists.

- (c) **Share the Road** – WSDOT **does not** use the supplemental SHARE THE ROAD (W16-1) plaque. Instead, use BIKES ON ROAD or a warning sign that indicates the specific roadway condition, such as NO SHOULDERS or NARROW SHOULDERS.
- (d) **Fire Station/Emergency Vehicle** – FIRE STATION/EMERGENCY VEHICLE (W11-8) signs with the EMERGENCY SIGNAL AHEAD (W11-12P) supplemental plaque shall be placed in advance of all emergency vehicle traffic control signals. The signs may also be installed at locations where there is limited sight distance to the fire station road approach or where the approach is in an area where a motorist would not normally expect to see a fire truck or emergency vehicle enter the roadway. Fire station/emergency vehicle warning signs are not generally used at intersections, unless an emergency vehicle traffic control signal is present.
- (e) **Snowmobile** – A snowmobile crossing which is located at least 100 feet from any public roadway intersection ([RCW 46.10.100](#)) may be signed with SNOWMOBILE (W11-6) signs. This sign is seasonal and should be removed, folded, or covered when the condition does not exist.
- (f) **Farm Machinery** – FARM MACHINERY signs (W11-5, W11-5A) may be installed at locations where farm machinery or equipment enters, crosses, or travels along a roadway and where there is limited sight distance or an operational concern. If the farm machinery will be on the roadway for more than ¼ mile, a supplemental DISTANCE PLAQUE (W13-401) may be added.

Consider sign installation where:

- There is limited sight distance to the farm machinery crossing or entrance onto the roadway.
- The road user would not normally expect to see a farm vehicle, such as where a farm is operating in an area that has or is being developed for residential or commercial use.
- There is inadequate stopping sight distance to a slow moving vehicle along the roadway.

- There is a history of police, farmer, or public complaints, or operational conflicts.

To reduce operational conflicts, work with the farmer to restrict highway driving to daylight hours and non-peak periods, to drive on the shoulder if possible, and to use alternate routes if available.

Farm equipment used on the roadway must be equipped with a reflective hazard triangle sign and a flashing beacon ([RCW 46.37.160](#)).

(18) Nonvehicular Traffic Signs

NONVEHICULAR TRAFFIC signs may be used to alert road users to general locations where unexpected entries into the roadway or shared use of the roadway may occur.

- (a) Pedestrian** – A PEDESTRIAN CROSSING sign (W11-2) may be installed where attention needs to be drawn to the pedestrian presence, as evidenced by a traffic engineering analysis. Fluorescent yellow green may be used as a background sign color where extra attention needs to be drawn to a crossing, such as in urban areas with many distractions. When used at a specific crossing, the sign shall be supplemented with a diagonal downward pointing arrow plaque (W16-7P) showing the crossing location.
- (b) Deer Crossing** – Install DEER CROSSING (W11-3) signs to alert motorists when approaching an area where deer or elk may unexpectedly enter the roadway.

Gather information from the following sources when considering sign installation:

- Region Maintenance personnel.
- WSDOT Headquarters Environmental Services Office, Fish and Wildlife program. They compile a Wildlife Carcass Removal data base which notes deer and other wildlife killed on state highways.
- Records of crashes with wildlife, maintained by the WSDOT Travel and Collision Data Office.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife's regional biologists have additional information on concentrations and migratory routes of deer.

Consider the following criteria before installing DEER CROSSING (W11-3) signs:

- Minimum of five documented deer/vehicle collisions per mile per year for at least two of the past 10 years.
- Minimum of 10 carcass counts per mile per year for at least three of the past 10 years.
- Concurrence from region maintenance personnel

Existing DEER CROSSING sign locations should be reviewed every five years.

- (c) **Cattle Crossing (Livestock)** – The CATTLE CROSSING (W11-4) or HORSE CROSSING (W11-7) sign may be used where there are frequent cattle, horse, or other livestock crossings at a specific site. Consider each request based on roadway type, traffic volumes, and number of crossings. A crossing site used once a day would warrant a sign, whereas one used once a month would not.

Cattle signs are not used for the movement of livestock along a highway such as a sheep or cattle drive. Requests for temporary traffic control to accommodate livestock movement are handled by the region on a case by case basis.

(19) Congested Area

CONGESTED AREA (W14-2202) signs may be installed at locations where traffic congestion occasionally occurs. Examples include rural areas where businesses or other community development periodically generate traffic volumes greater than normally would be expected at that location.

(20) Congestion Ahead

The CONGESTION AHEAD (W14-2203) sign is only used where sight distance to the congested area is restricted.

(21) Grated Bridge Deck

The GRATED BRIDGE DECK sign (W8-2101) shall be installed in advance of all bridges with grated decks on any portion of the roadway. Because deck grates may affect the handling characteristics of some vehicles, particularly motorcycles and bicycles, it is important to alert these road users to the road condition.

(22) Pavement Ruts

The PAVEMENT RUTS sign (W8-2201) may be installed on roadway sections where there are longitudinal wheel track ruts. Such ruts may cause vehicle vibration or other unexpected movements when a vehicle crosses them to change lanes or exit the roadway. The region Traffic Office should determine appropriate placement of these signs, based on an engineering and traffic investigation. On multilane divided roadways, post signs on both sides of the roadway.

(23) Rocks

The ROCKS sign (W8-1701) may be installed to alert roadway users to roadway sections that are known to have or are subject to frequent rockfall occurrences. Maintenance crews or the Washington State Patrol often supply this information. The department Material Lab developed a numerical rating system for unstable slopes at wwwi.wsdot.wa.gov/systems/slope/inventory/slope_search.cfm.

When a potential rockfall location has a numerical rating of 200 points or greater, a ROCK sign should be installed. A separate sign is not required at each location if adjacent locations can be combined using a FOR NEXT XX MILES sign.

Category	3 Points	9 Points	27 Points	81 Points
Problem Type: Soil	Cut or Fill Slope Erosion	Settlement or Piping	Slow Moving Landslides	Rapid Landslides or Debris Flow
Problem Type: Rock	Minor Rockfall Good Catchment	Moderate Rockfall Fair Catchment	Major Rockfall Limited Catchment	Major Rockfall No Catchment
Average Daily Traffic	< 5,000	5,000 to 20,000	20,000 to 40,000	> 40,000
Decision Sight Distance	Adequate	Moderate	Limited	Very Limited
Impact of Failure on Roadway	< 50 Feet	50 to 200 Feet	200 to 500 Feet	> 500 Feet
Roadway Impedance	Shoulder Only	½ of Roadway	¾ of Roadway	Full Roadway
Average Vehicle Risk	< 25% of the Time	25% to 50% of the Time	50% to 75% of the Time	> 75% of the Time
Pavement Damage	Minor – Not Noticeable	Moderate – Driver Must Slow	Severe – Driver Must Stop	Extreme – Not Traversable
Failure Frequency	No Failures in Last 5 Years	One Failure in Last 5 Years	One Failure Each Year	More Than One Failure per Year
Annual Maintenance Costs	< \$5,000 per Year	\$5,000 to \$10,000 per Year	\$10,000 to \$50,000 per Year	> \$50,000 per Year
Economic Factor	No Detours Required	Short Detours < 3 Miles	Long Detours > 3 Miles	Sole Access No Detours
Accidents in Last 10 Years	0 or 1	2 or 3	4 or 5	> 5

Rating Criteria
Table 2-7

(24) Transit Stop Ahead

Install the TRANSIT STOP AHEAD (W14-1101) symbol sign in advance of a region Traffic office approved transit stop in the travel lane of a state highway when:

- The transit stop is located in an unincorporated area; and
- There is less than 500 feet of sight distance to the transit stop.

Install the sign in accordance with [MUTCD Table 2C-4](#) (Advance Placement of Warning Signs). Refer to [WAC 468-46](#) and [Chapter 7, Section 7.9](#), of this manual, for further information about the transit stop approval process.

(25) Left Turns Ahead

The LEFT TURNS AHEAD (W2-601) sign may be used in advance of intersections to alert to possible left turning movement conflicts, as determined by an engineering and traffic investigation. Consider installing this sign at locations where any of the following conditions exist:

- The intersection is not channelized.
- Left-turning vehicles may queue in the traveled lane.
- Approach to the intersection does not provide adequate stopping sight distance.

(26) Lateral Clearance Markers (Object Markers)

The department installs Type 3 OBJECT/LATERAL CLEARANCE MARKERS (W12-401 L/R) to identify objects or conditions within or adjacent to the roadway such as:

- narrow bridges with reduced width shoulders
- drop-offs
- small traffic islands
- underpass piers
- bridge abutments
- barriers
- handrails
- culvert headwalls

IMPACT ATTENUATOR MARKERS (W12-501 and W12-502) are used to identify the nose section of an impact attenuator. Install a W12-501 when traffic approaching an attenuator passes only one side of the attenuator. Install a W12-502 when approaching traffic passes on both sides of the attenuator.

[MUTCD](#) Section 2C.64 and 2C.65 addresses appropriate use and installation requirements of lateral clearance markers. See [Appendix 2-11](#) and [2-11A](#).

(27) Water Over Roadway

The WATER OVER ROADWAY (W8-501) sign may be installed where water periodically and consistently accumulates. Hinge the sign to allow crews to open and close it as needed.

(28) Severe Side Winds Ahead

The SEVERE SIDE WINDS AHEAD (W14-801) sign may be installed where geologic or geographic features or other unique situations create unexpected and severe windy conditions that can impact the handling of a vehicle.

(29) Watch for Ice

The department no longer routinely uses WATCH FOR ICE (W8-1601) signs.

They may be considered in unique conditions such as where a natural or manmade feature causes consistent roadway wetness and where ice is likely to form during cold temperatures. Examples may include, but are not limited to locations where:

- A waterfall causes roadway moisture.
- An industrial facility consistently causes spray on the roadway.
- There is wetness from short or long-term drainage problems.
- Pavement sensors connected to the WATCH FOR ICE sign discern the outside temperature and flash an alert to motorists about the potential of ice on the roadway.
- Moisture vapor forms on the highway.

Any decision to post a WATCH FOR ICE sign must be based on a traffic engineering analysis and approved by the State Traffic Engineer, in consultation with the appropriate region traffic engineer.

(30) Grooved Pavement

Install the GROOVED PAVEMENT sign (W8-2001) where the roadway surface features closely spaced longitudinal grooves. Do not use this sign in areas of rutted pavement. [RCW 47.36.200](#) notes that where a GROOVED PAVEMENT sign is used, a MOTORCYCLES USE EXTREME CAUTION (W21-1701) sign must also be used.

2.9 School Areas

School related signing is installed to alert motorists to an upcoming school bus stop or school crossing, and the possible presence of children standing near, walking along, or crossing the roadway. Fluorescent yellow-green (FYG) is the standard background color for school signs.

The department is responsible for school bus stop and crossing related signing. Additional signs (such as an overhead School Crossing sign) are generally the responsibility of the school district requesting them.

(1) School Bus Stops

Install a SCHOOL BUS STOP AHEAD (S3-1) sign where there is less than 500 feet of sight distance to the bus stop, or when other operational factors indicate the need for a warning sign. Where there is not at least a minimum of 500 feet sight distance to the bus stop, it should be relocated if possible to provide ample visibility.

All school bus stops requiring an advance school bus stop sign must be reviewed and approved by the region Traffic Operations staff. Because of the frequent changes to bus stop locations, they should be periodically reviewed for possible sign removal or relocation.

The region traffic engineer must approve any school bus stops on limited access facilities ([WAC 468-58-030](#)) and provide this information to the State Traffic Engineer who maintains an inventory of the locations.

(2) School Bus Turnaround

The SCHOOL BUS TURNAROUND sign (S3-201) may be installed to alert motorists to an upcoming school bus turnaround location, where minimum sight distance to the turnaround is less than that shown in [MUTCD Table 2C-4](#), or when other operational factors indicate the need for a warning sign. Department policy is to not use the SCHOOL BUS TURN AHEAD sign as shown in the [MUTCD](#).

(3) Signing for Reduced School Zone Speed Limit

Reduced speed limits in school zones are established in compliance with [RCW 46.61.440\(1\)](#) which establishes a 20 mph speed zone **at a marked school or playground crosswalk** when the crosswalk is posted with standard school or playground speed limit signing. See [Section 6.4](#) for additional information on reduced school speed zones.

Standard reduced school zone speed limit signing at a marked school or playground crosswalk is shown in [Appendix 2-12](#) and includes:

- The SCHOOL (S1-1) sign with AHEAD plaque (W16-9P).
- The SCHOOL SPEED LIMIT (S5-101) sign assembly.
- The SCHOOL (S1-1) sign with ARROW plaque (W16-7P).
- The END SCHOOL ZONE (S5-2) sign with the subsequent SPEED LIMIT (R2-1) sign below.

The SCHOOL SPEED LIMIT (S5-501) sign assembly consists of three sections:

1. SCHOOL legend (S4-3) with black letters on a fluorescent yellow green background.
2. 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT sign (R1-1).
3. WINDOW OF ENFORCEMENT legend.

The enforcement legend is determined by the school district and can be any of the following:

- WHEN FLASHING (S5-1) used in conjunction with a flashing beacon above the sign, as described in [MUTCD Section 4L.04](#).
- WHEN CHILDREN ARE PRESENT (S5-101) used in conjunction with definitions provided in [WAC 392-151-035](#) and [WAC 468-95-350](#).
- WHEN FLAGGED (S5-102) used in conjunction with warning flags that are installed on the sign during the window of enforcement. The school is responsible for installation and removal of the flags.
- X:00 A.M. TO X:00 A.M./P.M. (S4-5) used to display the specific hours of the school speed limit.

(4) Flashing Beacons or Flags

The SCHOOL SPEED ZONE sign assembly may be supplemented with flashing beacons or flags to draw attention and increase compliance with the reduced speed zone. A Washington State Traffic Safety Commission study noted that WHEN FLASHING school zone signs were more effective in slowing vehicles than either WHEN CHILDREN ARE PRESENT or WHEN FLAGGED signs. The study notes that where the approach speed to a school speed zone is 35 mph or above, schools with WHEN FLASHING signs had significantly fewer vehicles travelling in excess of 35 mph (only 3 percent) than WHEN CHILDREN ARE PRESENT signs (30 percent) and WHEN FLAGGED signs (23 percent).

On highways where the approach speed to a school speed zone is 35 mph or more, or where a wide roadway increases children's exposure, consider the use of flashing beacons above the SCHOOL SPEED ZONE assembly. Beacons are generally paid for by the school district requesting the speed zone.

(5) School Crossings

School crossings may be established either adjacent to the school or as part of a school pedestrian route. Install the SCHOOL sign (S1-1) with a Diagonal Arrow plaque (W16-PL) at or near the crossing, and a SCHOOL sign (S1-1) with an AHEAD plaque (W16-9P) in accordance with [MUTCD](#) Table 2C-4.

- The SCHOOL (S1-1) sign may be installed at a crossing controlled by a traffic signal.
- Do not install a SCHOOL (S1-1) sign at an intersection crossing controlled by a STOP or YIELD sign.

(6) Overhead School Crosswalk Sign

The OVERHEAD CROSSWALK (W11A-301) sign is used only at marked school crosswalks where a traffic engineering analysis has determined that conventional traffic control measures are not adequate. It is installed in addition to the standard school crosswalk signing. The OVERHEAD CROSSWALK sign must include pedestrian or school activated flashing lights. The [MUTCD](#) allows the option to use the STOP FOR PEDESTRIANS overhead sign (R1-9a) instead. Consider these factors when determining installation of this sign:

- Approach speed of traffic.
- Width of crossing.
- Number of lanes.

Costs associated with installing and maintaining this traffic control device generally are the responsibility of the requesting school district.

2.10 Guide Signs

Guide signs direct roadway users along roads and highways by providing information about:

- Route designation.
- Directional and distance information.
- Geographical, recreational, or cultural points of interest.
- Motorists services.

The department receives frequent requests for guide signs. The quantity and spacing of guide signs is controlled so that the roadway user has adequate time to read, understand, and respond to the sign messages.

The *Design Manual* notes that guide sign plans are needed for Interstate highways and require Headquarters Traffic approval. Where a highway passes through a national forest or national park, there may be agreements in place that designate which agency is responsible for each sign type, as well as design requirements for signs. Sign design must consider these requirements.

Review sign requests by considering both the [MUTCD](#) sign purpose and the sign spacing criteria. Work with local groups to review conflicting requests, and to determine the most essential and effective signing. It may be necessary to remove or relocate existing signs to accommodate the addition of a more important sign, while avoiding sign proliferation.

Guide signs shall not include advertising.

(1) *Types of Guide Signs*

Guide signs are grouped by their purpose. Their use is determined according to standards and guidance in the [MUTCD](#).

- **Route Markers** display the official highway number and direction of travel.
- **Primary Guide Signs** include advance directional signs, exit directional signs, diagrammatic signs and pull-through signs. They direct roadway users to exit points for principal destinations served by intersections or interchanges, and to cities located on intersecting state routes.
- **Distance Signs** display distances to destinations and junctions along state routes.
- **Supplemental Guide Signs** provide direction to major traffic generators or other points of interest, or to destinations preempted from the primary guide sign.
- **Follow-Through Signs** provide continued direction, beginning at the point of exit from the state highway, and following through to the destination displayed on the guide sign.

- **General Motorist Service Signs (MSS)** provide information for the unfamiliar traveler about services available at or accessed from upcoming intersections and interchanges.
- **Motorist Information Signs (MIS)** provide information about specific businesses that meet certain service criteria. The MIS program is regulated by [RCW 47.36.310](#), [RCW 47.36.320](#), and [WAC 468-70](#).

Where sign space is available, guide signs on expressways or freeways generally include:

- One or two advance directional signs where interchange spacing allows.
- An exit directional sign.
- One supplemental guide sign, installed approximately halfway between the advance directional and exit directional sign. It is only installed if spacing requirements can be met.

[MUTCD](#) minimum spacing requirements between directional guide signs are:

- 800 feet for freeway and expressways.
- 500 feet for two-lane, high-speed roadways.
- 300 feet for high speed multilane with at-grade intersections
- 200 feet for two-lane and multilane low speed highways within incorporated areas.

(2) Guide Sign Color

Guide signs are generally white letters on a green background. However, some types of signs use other background colors to distinguish the type of destination to which they are signing.

Following are standard guide sign background colors:

- **Brown** – Heritage Markers, State Parks, National parks, U.S. Forest Service facilities, Department of Natural Resources campgrounds, Recreation Activity signs with symbols, Watchable Wildlife, State Public fishing areas.
- **Blue** – Motorist Service signs (MSS), Motorist Information signs (MIS), Washington State Patrol, fire district boundary, fish related signs.
- **Green** – All other guide signs.

(3) Guide Signs On Conventional Roads

Install guide signs in accordance with guidelines in [MUTCD](#) Chapter 2D.

Guide sign installation for route intersections is shown in [Appendix 2-13](#) for:

- Junctions of state highways.
- Junctions of county roads or city streets that lead to significant destinations.

(4) Guide Signs On Expressways and Freeways

Install guide signs in accordance with guidelines in [MUTCD Chapter 2E](#). Guide sign installation illustrations are shown in [Appendices 2-14](#) through [2-21](#) for:

- Crossroad Interchange Approach ([Appendix 2-14](#))
- Expressway Intersection Approach ([Appendix 2-15](#))
- Expressway Interchange Approach ([Appendix 2-16](#))
- Freeway Interchange Approach ([Appendix 2-17](#))
- Freeway Exit Ramp ([Appendix 2-18](#))
- Freeway Post Interchange ([Appendix 2-19](#))
- Auxiliary Freeway Lane – Less than ¼ mile long ([Appendix 2-20](#))
- Auxiliary Freeway Lane – More than ¼ mile long ([Appendix 2-21](#))

2.11 Route Signs

A route sign assembly consists of a route sign and auxiliary signs that further identify the route and indicate direction of travel. For conventional roadways, [MUTCD Section 2D.29](#) through [2D.32](#) provide guidance for the various types of route sign assemblies.

For expressways and freeways, route sign assemblies are typically used for route confirmation and trailblazing purposes. In addition to the guidance provided in [MUTCD Section 2E.25](#), install route confirmation sign assemblies at these locations:

- Entrances to Washington State.
- Beyond interchanges.
- On the far side of intersections with other numbered routes or major local roads.
- Beyond city limits.

In urban and residential areas, install route confirmation sign assemblies at intervals that will keep an unfamiliar motorist informed of the route. Note that where interchanges and intersections are closely spaced and available sign space is limited, speed limit signs are a higher priority than route confirmation sign assemblies.

2.12 Primary Guide Signs

(1) General

Advance directional, exit directional, diagrammatic, and pull-through signs are all considered primary guide signs that provide guidance to the motorist about destinations served by upcoming exits or intersections. The [MUTCD](#) defines the required and allowable numbers of guide signs for the various roadway types and interchange classifications. Information is also provided about installation, location, and letter/legend criteria for these signs.

On Conventional roads, a maximum of three lines of destinations may be displayed on a primary guide sign ([MUTCD Section 2D.07](#)). On Freeways/ Expressways, a maximum of two destinations may be displayed on a primary guide sign ([MUTCD Section 2E.10](#)). A sign support having two or more signs may display a maximum of three destinations. Display the same message on all advance and exit directional signs installed in a series. This provides consistent and effective information to the roadway user, especially the unfamiliar traveler.

Department guidelines require that any freeway exit that is a left-hand rather than right-hand exit must be signed with a yellow LEFT EXIT plaque on both the advance directional and the exit directional sign.

(2) Destination Selection

Display the primary destination(s) served by the upcoming exit or intersection and a second destination using the prioritized list below.

Consider:

- The control city along the intersecting route.
- A junction with another numbered highway.
- The name of a city or town.
- A tribal reservation.
- A street or roadway name.
- Other major destination such as mountain passes, National Parks, or major airports.

Apply the same destination selection criteria for signs on all conventional roads, expressways, and freeways. As development occurs, it may be necessary to replace existing destinations with ones that have become more essential.

Ventures operated by private entities for profit, and to other ventures not of general interest to the traveling public are not signed on guide signs on state highways. These entities may instead qualify for Motorist Service Signs (MIS), Tourist Activity signs, or Recreation signing. Current ventures must be signed under the new criteria when the current sign service life is over. Shopping malls that qualify for signing under [RCW 47.36.270](#) are an exception and may be signed on primary or supplemental guide signs.

(3) Control City on Destination Signing

A control city is used on guide signs at junctions with other highways ([MUTCD Chapter 2D](#)). The designated control city for selected state routes is shown as follows:

US 2	
EB from Everett	Wenatchee
EB from Wenatchee	Spokane
EB from Spokane	Newport
WB from Idaho State Line	Spokane
WB from Spokane	Davenport
WB from Davenport	Wenatchee
WB from Wenatchee	Everett
I-5	
NB from Vancouver, WA	Seattle
NB from Seattle	Vancouver, B.C.
SB from Vancouver, B.C.	Seattle
SB from Seattle	Portland
US 12	
EB from Aberdeen	Olympia
EB from Elma	Centralia
EB from I-5	Yakima
EB from Yakima	Richland
EB from Pasco	Walla Walla
EB from Walla Walla	Lewiston
WB from Idaho State Line	Walla Walla
WB from Walla Walla	Pasco
WB from Richland	Yakima
WB from Yakima	Interstate 5
WB from I-5	Aberdeen
SR 14	
EB from Vancouver	I-82/Kennewick
WB from I-82	Vancouver
SR 20	
EB from Keystone	Anacortes
EB from Anacortes	Burlington
EB from Burlington	Okanogan
EB from Okanogan	Colville
EB from Colville	Newport
WB from Idaho State Line	Colville
WB from Colville	Okanogan
WB from Okanogan	Burlington
WB from Burlington	Anacortes
WB from Anacortes	Coupeville

I-82	
EB from Ellensburg	Yakima
EB from Yakima	Richland
EB from Richland	Pendleton
WB from Oregon State Line	Kennewick
WB from Kennewick	Yakima
WB from Yakima	Ellensburg
I-90	
EB from Seattle	Ellensburg
EB from Ellensburg	Spokane
EB from Spokane	Coeur d'Alene
WB from Idaho State Line	Spokane
WB from Spokane	Ellensburg
WB from Ellensburg	Seattle
US 97	
NB from Oregon State Line	Yakima
NB from Ellensburg	Wenatchee
NB from Wenatchee	Okanogan
NB from Okanogan	Penticton, B.C.
SB from Canadian Border	Wenatchee
SB from Wenatchee	Ellensburg
SB from Yakima	Goldendale
US 101	
NB from Oregon State Line	Aberdeen
NB from Aberdeen	Port Angeles
NB from Olympia	Port Angeles
SB from Port Angeles (East Leg)	Olympia
SB from Port Angeles (West Leg)	Aberdeen
SB from Aberdeen	Astoria
I-182	
EB from I-82	Richland
EB from Richland	Pasco
WB from Pasco	Richland
WB from Richland	I-82/Yakima
US 195	
NB from Idaho State Line	Spokane
SB from Spokane	Lewiston

I-205	
NB from Oregon State Line	Seattle
SB from Jct. I-5	Salem
US 395	
NB from Oregon State Line	Kennewick
NB from Pasco	Spokane
NB from Spokane	Colville
NB from Colville	Grand Forks, B.C.
SB from Canadian Border	Spokane
SB from Ritzville	Pasco
I-405	
NB from Jct. I-5 (Southcenter)	Renton
NB from Renton	Bellevue
NB from Bellevue	Everett
SB from Jct. I-5 (Lynwood)	Bellevue
SB from Bellevue	Renton

2.13 Distance Signs

(1) General

A distance sign can display up to three destinations ([MUTCD Chapter 2D](#)). Apply the same destination selection criteria for signs on all conventional roads, expressways, and freeways.

- On the first line, identify the next city with services available, or the next intersected numbered route.
- On the second line, if used, identify communities of general interest along the route. Vary the named community on successive distance signs to provide maximum information to the traveler.
- On the third or bottom line, display the next control city along the route or terminal destination.

Install distance signs at the following locations:

- Beyond intersections and interchanges of numbered state highway routes.
- Beyond city limits or urban boundaries.
- In rural areas at 10- to 15-mile intervals.
- At entrances to Washington State.

Where two or more of these locations occur within 10 miles, sign the most effective location.

(2) Determining Mileage Displayed on Distance Signs

- (a) **Freeways and Expressways** – Display the distance (in miles) from the sign to either the first interchange/intersection within the destination city limits, or to the city center. Regions must work with city administration to determine the preferred city center reference location.
- (b) **Conventional Highways** – Display the distance in miles from the sign to the destination city limits. For destinations such as Mt. Rainier National Park, display the distance to the park boundary.

2.14 Supplemental Guide Signs

(1) General

Supplemental guide signs direct unfamiliar motorists to additional destinations or points of interest that are not displayed on the primary guide signs. *The MUTCD allows only one supplemental guide sign to be installed for each interchange approach and it shall display a maximum of two destinations. Supplemental guide signs shall be installed only when MUTCD minimum spacing requirements can be met.*

Supplemental guide signs should not be installed for a traffic generator that would require a motorist to travel on the interchanging road beyond a second state highway (i.e., I-5 to SR 18 to SR 164).

In general, destinations that generate the greatest traffic volume or have the widest scope of recognition are given highest priority. Nationally recognized traffic generators receive priority over those that have state, regional, or local recognition. Evaluate the given interchange and select the destinations that provide the most benefit to the highway user.

As development occurs, it may be necessary to replace existing destinations with ones that have become more essential.

(2) Destination Selection Factors for Supplemental Guide Signs

Apply the destination selection criteria equally, whether the signs are on conventional roads, freeways, or expressways. Consider the following factors when evaluating a supplemental sign request:

- On an expressway or freeway, determine if the destination meets criteria contained in the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publication *Guidelines for the Selection of Supplemental Guide Signs for Traffic Generators Adjacent to Freeways*, which has been incorporated in the MUTCD (www.normas.com/aashto/pages/gsglc-4.html).
- State law mandates destination signing for State Parks and regional shopping centers when distance criteria are met.

- Consider how the proposed signing will affect local roadway traffic operations. Work with the local agency to determine the route to a destination and the sign locations. In general, sign to the supplemental destination from the interchange or intersecting road that provides the most direct route to the destination.
- Determine if follow-through signing is needed and work with the local agency to determine sign locations. Local agencies assume responsibility for sign installation and maintenance and must concur with any proposed signs.
- Avoid signing to destinations that require complex navigation on multiple highways, unless the activity is of national significance.

(3) **Destination Selection Priorities**

- (a) **Over-Flow Messages From Primary Guide Signs** – Occasionally, essential messages cannot be included on primary guide signs due to space limitations. Instead, place these essential messages on supplemental guide signs, giving them priority over any other supplemental sign messages.

(b) **Destinations Mandated by Statute**

1. **State Parks** – State law ([RCW 47.36.290](#)) directs the department to install guide signing on interstate highways to State Parks located within 15 miles of the highway. These destinations have first priority on supplemental guide signs on interstate highways. Additionally, WSDOT policy is to install guide signs to a State Park within 15 miles of *any* state highway.

The department installs and maintains these signs and provides follow through signing on any state route that connects the state highway to the park. All State Park signs shall have white letters, symbols, and border on a brown background.

The State Parks and Recreation Commission is responsible for any State Park signing not located on a state highway.

a. **Freeway and Expressway Interchanges**

Mainline – Install signs displaying the name of the STATE PARK and a directional message, such as NEXT EXIT, in advance of the interchange, located to meet guide sign spacing requirements. If the park has restricted hours or days of operation, add a supplemental plaque displaying the operating schedule (i.e., CLOSED TUESDAYS) below the STATE PARK sign. No other supplemental plaques are used on the freeway mainline sign. Do not install mainline signing until all follow through signing is in place.

Ramp – Install signs displaying the message STATE PARK and a directional message, with a maximum of four recreational symbol plaques. Display the mileage to the park from the ramp terminal, using ¼ mile increments if the distance is less than 1 mile.

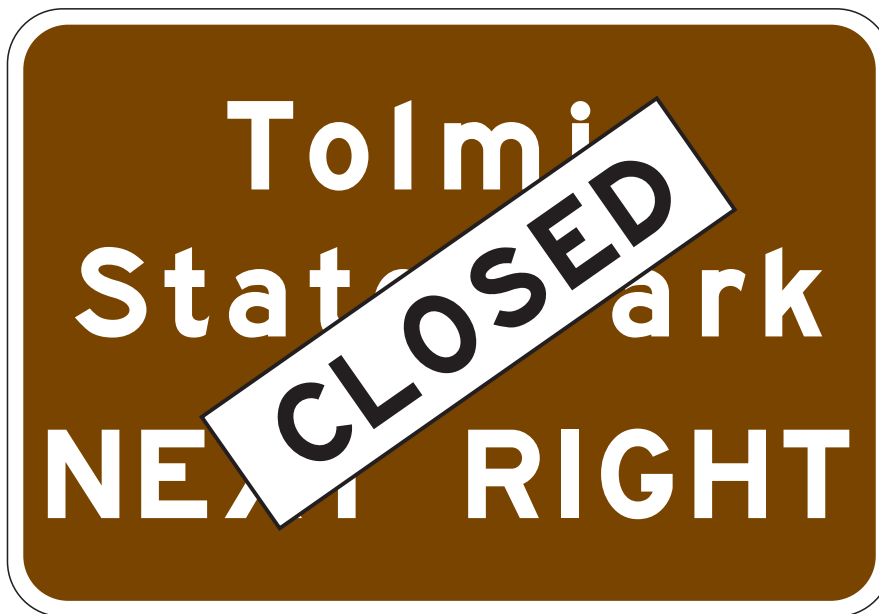
- b. **Conventional Roadway Intersections** – Install signs displaying the name of the STATE PARK and a directional message (NEXT RIGHT/NEXT LEFT) in advance of the intersection leading most directly to the park. Install a maximum of four recreational symbol plaques below.

Install a white on brown sign with the message STATE PARK (D1-101) and a directional arrow at the intersection of a state route and roadway leading to a state park. Display the mileage to the park from the intersection. Use ¼-mile increments if the distance is less than 1 mile.

- c. **Recreational Symbol Plaques** – A maximum of four recreational symbol plaques may be displayed under a state park directional sign, on both conventional roads and on freeway off-ramps.
- Plaques are 24 inch x 24 inch with white message on a brown background.
 - If the park does not have camping facilities, display the text message NO CAMPING as one of the recreational plaques.
 - If a park has restricted hours or days of operation, display the operating schedule (i.e., CLOSED TUESDAYS) as one of the plaques.
 - The park manager for each individual park will determine the additional supplemental symbols to be displayed.
 - If a BEACH message is to be shown, use a text message plaque instead of a symbol.
 - Before replacing any state park sign, contact the park manager, to determine if any plaque changes are needed.
 - If the symbols are seasonal, a written agreement is developed between the state park manager, the local maintenance superintendent, and region Traffic Operations. The agreement outlines who will be responsible for changing the symbols, at what specific time periods, as well as any cost reimbursement that may be involved.
 - Headquarters Traffic Office maintains an inventory of the recreational symbols used at each state park. Inform Headquarters Traffic when symbol plaques are changed, added, or removed.
- d. **Additional Signs** – CAMPGROUND FULL signs may be used at off-ramps and on conventional highways in conjunction with a State Park directional sign. It can be either a post mounted stand-alone sign or a changeable message plaque under the ramp or conventional highway sign. CAMPGROUND FULL signs may not be displayed on a freeway mainline.

A written agreement is developed between the state park manager, the local maintenance superintendent, and region Traffic Operations. The agreement outlines who will be responsible for changing the CAMPGROUND FULL sign, and for the sign fabrication, installation, maintenance, and removal. State Parks will be responsible for all associated costs, administered through a J account.

During seasonal closures, STATE PARK CLOSED plaques are installed on all state parks guide signs, including those on the freeway mainline. This is done rather than removing or turning them. Mount the plaque diagonally from lower left corner to upper right corner on the sign face. Use a panel size that is large enough to effectively cover the legend and a letter size at least as large as the upper case letters in the STATE PARK message. See [Figure 2-1](#).



State Park Closed
Figure 2-1

2. **Regional Shopping Centers** – State law ([RCW 47.36.270](#)) and [WAC 468-95-140](#) requires that regional shopping centers be signed from state highways, if spacing requirements can be met and the shopping center:
 - Has at least 500,000 square feet of leasable retail space.
 - Contains at least three major department stores owned by a national or regional retail chain.
 - Is located within 1 highway mile of a state highway.
 - Generates a minimum of 9,000 daily one-way vehicle trips.

All costs associated with fabricating, installing, and maintaining signs shall be the responsibility of the shopping center.

If the shopping center is not clearly visible from the state highway point of exit, follow-through signing must be in place on city or county roads prior to mainline sign installation.

Signing on the state highway to a county road or city street that bears the name of the regional shopping center fulfills the statutory requirements for signing to those centers.

- (c) **Other Supplemental Guide Sign Destinations** – The following non-prioritized list includes examples of destinations (traffic generators) that may warrant supplemental guide signing. It is intended to aid in determining appropriate destinations.

Airports
 Amtrak/Other Railroad
 Business Routes
 Colleges/Universities
 Event Venues, Fairgrounds
 Ferries
 Historic District (may be signed as a Tourist Activity under MIS program if guide signs are full)
 Industrial Parks
 Military Installations
 National Parks
 Natural/Cultural/Historic Attractions
 Park and Ride Lots
 Ports/Port Districts
 Recreational Areas
 Scenic Byways
 Stadiums (Sports Facilities)
 Tribal Reservations
 USFS (Headquarters Facilities/Campground)

2.15 Destination Selection Requirements and Installation Details for Specific Types of Traffic Generators

Specific traffic generators (destinations) must meet the criteria listed below to warrant a message on a supplemental guide sign. [Appendix 2-22](#) contains the criteria for freeway installations in a table format. Supplemental guide signing shall be installed in accordance with the specific details shown below.

(1) **Airports**

Airports are eligible for signing if they are included in the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems and meet these criteria:

- Associated with an area population of 10,000 or more.
- Located within 5 miles of interchange or intersection.
- Airport runway shall be paved, lighted and 2,500 feet or more in length.

- Municipally or privately owned, and used for commercial enterprise with the following minimum number of regularly scheduled commercial flights per day:
 - 35 flights per day in major metropolitan area (greater than 50,000).
 - 20 flights per day in an urban area (5,000-49,999).
 - 15 flights per day in rural areas.

Contact the WSDOT Aviation Division to determine if a specific airport meets these criteria.

Airports that have scheduled flights can be signed with the airport name. All other airports are signed with the airport symbol or word message.

Airports at remote locations serving a smaller population may be signed when their location is not obvious from the state highway, even if there are no commercial flights.

Existing signs to airports that do not meet these criteria may remain in place until a higher priority destination warrants a supplemental sign.

(2) Amtrak/Other Passenger Rail Stations

Install Amtrak logo signing to Amtrak stations as described below. For other types of rail passenger stations such as those of a Public Transit Authority, a specific logo may be cooperatively developed with Public Transit Authority and department approval, and installed as described below.

(a) Conventional Roadways

- Use Amtrak symbols or other approved logo signs in the trailblazer format with the appropriate directional arrows.

(b) Multilane Highways

- If there is enough space to install an individual sign, the Amtrak symbol plaque or other approved logo may be placed on a green background panel with either of these messages: NEXT RIGHT or EXIT XXX ([Appendix 2-23](#), part a).
- If there is not enough space to install an individual sign, the Amtrak symbol plaque or approved logo sign may be installed below the advance exit or the exit directional sign, on the post closest to the traveled way ([Appendix 2-23](#), part b).
- If the sign cannot be installed as above, the Amtrak symbol plaque or approved logo sign may be installed below the supplemental guide sign, on the post closest to the traveled way ([Appendix 2-23](#), part c).
- Install Amtrak trailblazer signs or other approved logo signs along freeway ramps or at ramp terminals. All trailblazer signs must be in place before any mainline signs are installed.

- The Amtrak symbol plaque or other approved logo sign may be installed as part of a multi-modal transportation logo board, along with approved symbols for other modes of transportation.

(3) Business Route

BUSINESS ROUTE signs (M4-3) direct motorists to alternate routes passing through the business portion of a city or through a district of continuous business development. BUSINESS ROUTE signing is generally installed at the request of a local agency. It is not permitted where MOTORIST INFORMATION (MIS) signing is installed.

Any addition or deletion of an Interstate or US highway segment as a Business Route must first be approved by AASHTO. Proposals to add or delete such routes should be sent to the department's GeoMetrix Office.

Designated Business Routes may be signed as follows:

- Install signing on a state highway business route only if it passes adequately and logically through a business district.
- BUSINESS LOOP (M1, 2, or 3) trailblazers along the route are installed and maintained by the local agency which has jurisdiction over the business route. A written agreement clarifies the jurisdiction.

(4) Colleges and Universities

Supplemental signing may be considered for a State College or University, their satellite campuses, other regional public or private colleges and universities, and technical schools if they meet the guidelines below and if sign spacing requirements can be met.

Signing is installed from the state highway nearest the campus and is limited to the nearest and most direct interchange or intersection. Signing may also be installed from a freeway or expressway to a conventional state highway where the conventional highway is used primarily by local traffic. Signing is not provided from a freeway or expressway to another freeway or expressway.

Supplemental signing may be installed when:

- The school is accredited in Washington State. Accredited schools are listed on the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) agency website at www.nwccu.org.
- The main or satellite campus is located within 5 miles of a state highway.
- Enrollment criteria are met. Call the Higher Education Coordinating Board at 360-753-7800 for the current enrollment figures.

Enrollment criteria (including part time and full time) based on any semester or quarter within the last school year:

- 4,500 students in a major metropolitan area (50,000 or greater).
- 2,500 students in an urban area (5,000-49,999).
- 1,000 students in a rural area.

In metropolitan and urban areas where two or more colleges or universities share a common campus, enrollments may be combined. The enrollment for the minor school should be at least 1,000 students. Metropolitan and urban area boundaries can be determined from the state urban boundary map.

If school enrollment falls below the minimum number for one year, the school will be given written notice that the highway signing will be removed if the following fall semester or quarter enrollment does not reach the minimum number.

Two schools may not share the same sign, if they do not share a common campus. If two schools are located in the same area, but do not share a common campus, determine which school is shown on the sign by the following order of priority:

- State university.
- State college.
- Private university or college.
- Technical college or school.

University Mascot Logos – At a University’s request, a University mascot logo may be installed on guide signs under the following conditions:

- It is a State University.
- The university name is already displayed on the guide sign.
- Mascot logos may be added only on signs for main campuses.
- The university must supply the logos and pay all costs including engineering, fabrication, installation, and traffic control.
- Maximum logo size is 30" x 30".

If there is insufficient space to display a mascot logo on the sign face, the logo will be installed directly above the upper left-hand corner of the guide sign. If the university wants the logo incorporated onto the face of the guide sign, they have the option of paying for a complete new guide sign to include the logo.

When the guide sign is due for replacement, it may be enlarged to incorporate the mascot logo onto the sign face at no cost to the university.

(5) Event Venues, Arenas, Auditoriums, Convention Halls, Fairgrounds, Stadiums

Event venues may be considered for supplemental guide signs using the following criteria, but only where **MUTCD** spacing guidelines are met.

- In a major metropolitan area of 50,000 or greater population, the venue must be within 2 miles of the state highway, and the annual attendance at the facility must be at least 300,000.
- In an urban area of 5,000-49,999 population, the venue must be within 2 miles of the state highway, and the annual attendance at the facility must be at least 250,000.
- In rural areas, the venue must be within 5 miles of the state highway, and the annual attendance at the facility must be at least 200,000.
- Signs may be installed directing venue traffic from one state highway to another.

(6) Industrial Parks

Supplemental guide signing to an industrial park may be considered using the following criteria, but only where **MUTCD** spacing guidelines are met.

- The industrial park has at least 500,000 square feet of space available for lease (may include a mix of manufacturing, service, and warehouse facilities).
- The industrial park is within 5 miles of the state highway.

(7) Natural, Historic, and Cultural Attractions

- (a) **General Criteria** – Consider supplemental guide signing to natural, historic, and cultural attractions if the attraction meets guidelines shown below, but only where **MUTCD** sign spacing guidelines can be met. Signing is not provided if the attraction is readily visible from and has direct access to the state highway. Privately operated commercial attractions (i.e., Wild Waves) are signed as part of the Motorist Information Sign (MIS) program as a Tourist Activity.

Periodic reviews by region personnel ensure that signing is displayed only for attractions that meet eligibility criteria and that signs are removed or covered when the attraction is closed for the season, no longer meets criteria, or is no longer in operation. Reviews may also identify new attractions that meet eligibility criteria.

Natural, historic, and cultural attractions must meet the following general criteria to be considered for supplemental signing:

- The attraction must have regional or national significance and meet destination or traffic generator guidelines. Do not sign attractions that are primarily of local interest.

- The attraction must be located within 10 miles of the interchange or intersection being signed. Signing is installed only on the state highway nearest to the attraction. Any necessary follow-through signing shall be in place prior to installing state highway signs.
 - The attraction must be open without appointment to the general public.
 - Attractions must be accessible by a two-lane, all-weather road as a minimum.
 - The attraction must be maintained in good repair and presented in a professional manner.
 - If the attraction charges an entrance fee, the activity is responsible for all costs for fabrication, installation, maintenance and replacement. A co-signed agreement with the business or organization establishes the approximate costs and payment method. Examples are Fort Vancouver Historic Site and Maryhill Museum.
 - If the activity is operated by a governmental agency or organization, the department will install the signs at no cost to that agency or organization.
 - The signs shall be white letters on a green background. This color change increases the reflective service life of the signs. All existing white on brown signs should be replaced with white on green as normal service life expires. **Signing for Heritage Markers, State Parks, National Parks, or U.S. Forest Service facilities will remain white on brown.**
 - For attractions located more than 1 mile from the interchange or intersection, display mileage information on the ramp terminal or direction signs.
 - For seasonal operations, signs must be removed or covered with a CLOSED plaque during the off season. See [Figure 2-1](#) for example
- (b) **Natural Attractions** – In addition to the general criteria above, consider signing to natural attractions if they are unique or of a type not generally accessible to the public. Examples of natural attractions are the Palisades Rock Formation, the Ice Caves west of Trout Lake, Hurricane Ridge, and the Snake River Canyon.
- (c) **Historic Attractions** – In addition to the general criteria above, historic attractions may be considered for signing if:
- They are included in the Washington Heritage Register as designated and maintained by the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
 - They have been approved by the Washington State Historical Society.
 - The attraction includes one or more of the following features at the site:
 1. An interpretive center and/or a guided tour.
 2. Visible historic buildings, features, or ruins with interpretive markers.

Examples of historic attractions are the Whitman Mission, Steptoe Battlefield, Jackson House, Fort Simcoe, and the Monticello Convention Site. The application form ([Appendix 2-24](#)) may be used to document if the attraction meets the eligibility criteria.

Determine if the attraction is included on the Washington Heritage Register at www.dahp.wa.gov/pages/historicsites/washingtonheritageregister.htm.

To determine if the Washington State Historical Society has approved the attraction, contact:

Washington State Historical Society
Outreach Services Division
211 21st Avenue SW
Olympia, WA 98501
360-586-0219

(d) **Cultural Attractions** – In addition to the general criteria above, consider signing to cultural attractions if they are similar to, or fall within, one of the following categories:

- **Museums** – Endorsed by the Washington State Historical Society.
- **Religious** – Sites, shrines, etc., that are of a unique religious nature and provide visitor facilities or tours.
- **Educational** – Centers other than public or private schools, vocational schools, or colleges and universities that are of outstanding educational value and provide visitor facilities or tours.
- **Scientific** – Locations used for research or scientific advancement that provide visitor facilities or tours.

Examples of cultural attractions are the Maryhill Museum, St. Mary's Mission, the Forest Learning Center near Mount St. Helens, and the Goldendale Observatory. The form in [Appendix 2-24](#) may be used as an application for cultural attractions.

(8) Heritage Markers

HERITAGE MARKER signs (15-103/104) guide motorists to historical or other interpretive markers located along state highways (see [Section 7.11](#)). They are used where there is a marker but no building or other facility. Use both the advance sign as well as the “at point” sign to give adequate guidance and time for a motorist response. HERITAGE MARKER signs are white on a brown background and replace existing HISTORIC MARKER and ROADSIDE ATTRACTION signs. Examples of HERITAGE MARKER sites include Willy Keil's Grave, the Bridge of the Gods, and Earthquake Point north of Entiat.

Do not use a HERITAGE MARKER sign to direct motorists to a historical site on either the national or state registers. These sites are signed using Historical attraction criteria and signing.

(9) Ports/Port Districts

Supplemental guide signing to Ports or Port Districts may be considered if sign space is available per the [MUTCD](#), using the following criteria:

- The facility is served by two or more modes of transportation and is generating commercial traffic.
- Goods move in and out of the facility.

(10) Recreational Activities and Areas

Supplemental guide signs to specific recreation activities open to the public (such as Emerald Downs racetrack, Cheney Stadium, or Northwest Trek) may be considered if [MUTCD](#) spacing guidelines are met, together with the following attendance criteria:

- Major Metropolitan Area – 300,000
- Urban Area – 250,000
- Rural Area – 100,000

Install RECREATION AREA (D7-7701) signing to guide motorists to public or private recreational activities that meet the criteria below. Display a maximum of four activity symbol plaques below the RECREATION AREA and direction message.

- The activity is not readily visible from the highway, and has no direct access to the highway.
- The activity is within 10 miles of the interchange or intersection being signed, and is served by at least a two lane, all-weather road.
- The activity is open to the public, without appointment, at least eight hours a day, five days a week including a Saturday and/or a Sunday.
- The destination facility must be maintained in good repair and presented in a professional manner.
- Location shall include free public restroom facilities with a sink and running water for hand washing, a flush toilet, toilet tissue, and sanitary towels or other hand-drying devices. Restroom facilities shall contain appropriate locks for occupant security and must be ADA accessible.
- If the activity charges an entrance fee, all costs for fabrication, installation, maintenance, and replacement are paid by the activity or organization. A co-signed agreement with the business or organization establishes the approximate costs and method for payment.
- Privately owned or operated recreational activities should be signed under the Motorist Information Signing Program, where applicable.
- Signing is installed only on the state highway nearest to the attraction. Follow-through signing shall be in place prior to installing state highway signs.

- For activities more than 1 mile from a freeway interchange, display mileage information on the ramp terminal sign. On conventional roads, show the mileage on the direction signs. The hours of operation may also be shown.
- Recreation signs without symbols shall be white letters on a green background. Replace existing brown and white signs as service life expires.



Figure 2-2

- For seasonal operations, signs must be removed or covered with a CLOSED plaque during the off season.

Along non-access controlled city streets that are part of the state highway system, within incorporated cities or towns with populations over 25,000, the local agency has jurisdiction for this signing.

Supplemental guide signs to specific **recreation areas** may be considered when the area is of regional significance such as Quinault Recreation Area. Signs and the symbol plaques shall be white on brown. See [Figure 2-3](#).



Figure 2-3

Public Recreation Areas – Display the AREA NAME (e.g., CAPITAL FOREST).

Multiple Agency Recreation Areas – Display the AREA NAME (e.g., CUSHMAN-STAIRCASE RECREATION AREA) and each agency’s logo. Do not include recreational activity symbols on multi-agency signs. Requesting agencies shall coordinate installation of follow-through signing with local road jurisdictions.

The following symbol plaques may be used:

Recreational Activity	Sign Fabrication Number
Picnic Area	D7-2201
Fishing	D7-1301
Trailer Camping	D9-3a
Boat Launch	D7-1101
Swimming	D7-1401
Hiking*	D7-501
Skiing	D7-2001
Snowmobile Area	D7-2101
Public Golf Course	D7-701
Public Beach Area	D7-1402

*Note: Sign trails of regional or statewide significance such as the Pacific Crest Trail, the John Wayne Trail, the Willapa Trail, and the Pacific Northwest Trail. Trail signs shall be a white on brown trail symbol with trail name below. Provide additional arrows and/or distance information as necessary.

(11) Tribal Reservations

- (a) **Reservation Boundary Signing** – ENTERING/LEAVING and (NAME OF) RESERVATION signs may be installed at reservation boundaries where the state highway passes through a tribal reservation. The boundary limits indicated are to be the original treaty boundary limits. If the reservation has a “patch work” boundary layout, place the boundary signs to encompass the entire patch work layout rather than installing individual sets of signs for each boundary crossing location. Signs shall be white letters on a green background.
- (b) **Directional/Distance Signing** – As sovereign nations, a tribal reservation may be considered as a primary or supplemental destination along with other local jurisdictions (a city or town). Tribal logos may be incorporated on directional signs. Any wording that refers to or implies a commercial enterprise is not allowed. Directional and distance signs shall be white letters on a green background.

Signing may be from one state highway to another if sign space is available. Ramp follow-through signing should show the mileage if the reservation is more than 1 mile away. Additional signing for the Tribal Center or Community Center may be considered at the nearest and most direct interchange or intersection, if it meets heritage, cultural, historic, or museum criteria.

Examples:

(NAME OF) RESERVATION
NEXT RIGHT or “X” Miles

(NAME OF) TRIBAL CENTER
NEXT RIGHT or “X” Miles

(12) United States Forest Service (USFS) Facilities

Supplemental guide signing to a USFS facility (campground, Visitor’s Center, or a Headquarters building) may be considered if distance criteria are met and sign space in accordance with the [MUTCD](#) is available.

The facility must be located within 1 mile of an interchange or intersection in a major metropolitan or urban area, and within 10 miles in a rural area. These signs are white letters on a brown background per agreement with the USFS (MOU NFS 00-MU-11060000-040). Contact the Headquarters Traffic Office for further guidance.

2.16 Unwarranted Traffic Generators/Destinations

Guide signs to activities operated by private entities for profit, and to other activities not of general interest to the traveling public are not permitted on state highways.

Traffic generators that do not warrant guide signing include:

Businesses

TV/Radio Stations
Theaters
Casinos
Nurseries

Cemeteries

Local or State
Private/Public
Military (exception: A National Cemetery or VA Granted Cemetery, as designated by the U.S. Dept. of Veteran Affairs, that is located within 10 miles of the nearest intersection or interchange, may be signed.)

Communities

Civil Centers
Libraries
Churches
Subdivisions
Neighborhoods

Governmental

Research/Experimental Facilities
County Facilities
Courthouses
Vehicle Emissions Testing Facilities
Drivers and Vehicle License Centers
Transportation Buildings
Civil Defense Facilities
Maintenance Facilities
Power Plants

Schools

Grade/High
Seminaries

Medical

Mental Facilities
Research Facilities
Sanitariums
Infirmaries or Treatment Centers
County, Fraternal, or Nursing Homes
Retirement Facilities
Humane Facilities

Military Sites or Detachments

Armories
Arsenals

Tree Nurseries/Arboretums***Camps***

Scout, Church, 4-H, Youth, and YMCA/YWCA (because these are not open to the public).

2.17 Follow-Through Signing

Follow-through signing provides motorists (after being directed off the state highway) with confirmation to destinations. Signs are installed and maintained by the agency responsible for the local roadway and must be in place before any directional signs are installed on the state highway.

When considering a destination for a supplemental guide sign, determine whether the local agency will install follow-through signing on the local roadway and coordinate the signing plan with them. Provide [MUTCD](#) guidelines for follow-through sign sizing to local agencies. Use 6-inch D series letters in high traffic volume or high speed areas. Use 5-inch C series letters, as a minimum, on lower volume or slower speed roadways. Include directional information or arrows as part of the legend.

Install follow-through signing in advance of decision points where route changes are required. Additional trailblazer signs may be placed at mandatory stop locations, but do not install these signs in combination with regulatory or warning signs.

2.18 General Motorist Service Signs (MSS)

(1) General

The [MUTCD](#) directs States to establish signing guidelines for several types of motorist services. Install GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE (MSS) signs where the services are not readily apparent to the motorist and where they meet the criteria noted below. GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE signs are not installed along a designated business route.

Do not combine GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE signing and MOTORIST INFORMATION (MIS LOGO) signs on the same back panel. If a specific MIS back panel is in place do not also install GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE signs for that service. (e.g., if a FOOD back panel exists then a general MSS food sign will not be installed). A specific business can join the MIS program instead.

Periodic reviews by region personnel ensure that signing is displayed only for services and facilities that meet eligibility criteria and that signs are removed or covered when the service or facility is closed for the season or no longer in operation.

The following motorist service signs may be installed:

Sign Symbol	Sign Fabrication Number
Gas	D9-11
Food	D9-8
Lodging	D9-9
Phone	D9-1
Hospital	D9-2
Emergency Medical Care Facility	D9-13
Camping	D9-3
Recreational Vehicle Park (text only)	D9-301
RV Sanitary Station	D9-12
Restrooms	D9-7
Propane	D9-15

Table 2-8

Install one GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE sign assembly at an interchange or intersection, with a maximum of four plaques. Combine the MOTORIST SERVICE message with a directional message such as NEXT RIGHT, SECOND RIGHT, or the EXIT NUMBER (D9-101, D9-102, or D9-103).

The NEXT SERVICES ____ MILES (D9-1601) sign may be placed below the MOTORIST SERVICE sign if the next services are more than 20 miles away.

A separate word message VISITOR INFORMATION sign may be installed under the GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE sign.

When services are not readily visible from an interchange, install follow-through signs at ramp terminals, using the same legends or symbols as on the mainline signs. If the services are located more than 1 mile from the interchange or intersection, display the distance to the services on the ramp terminal or direction sign respectively.

Signs have white symbols or letters on a blue background.

GENERAL MOTORIST SERVICE plaques may be installed in conjunction with other **guide** signs:

- On ground mounted signs, install the plaque on either post below the sign.
- If more than two MOTORIST SERVICE plaques are required, place them on a bracket below the guide sign, in a manner that does not interfere with the breakaway safety features of the sign structure.
- On overhead signs, a MOTORIST SERVICE plaque is installed above the guide sign.

The department uses the following criteria to determine if a motorist service sign is warranted. The State Traffic Engineer can approve minor deviations on a case-by-case basis.

(2) Gas, Diesel, and/or L-P Gas

- Vehicle services must include fuel, oil, and water.
- Location shall include free ADA accessible public restroom facilities with a sink and running water for hand washing, a flush toilet, toilet tissue, and sanitary towels or other hand-drying devices. Restroom facilities shall contain appropriate locks for occupant security.
- A free potable water drinking fountain and free cups as necessary must be supplied for public use.
- The facility must operate for at least 16 uninterrupted hours per day, seven days per week.
- A telephone must be available to the public.
- The facility must be within 1 mile of an interstate highway interchange, or within 5 miles, and not readily visible from a noninterstate highway.

(3) Food

- The facility must be licensed or approved by the appropriate county health agency.
- The facility must operate for at least 12 uninterrupted hours per day, seven days per week, and serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
- Location shall include free ADA accessible public restroom facilities with a sink and running water for hand washing, a flush toilet, toilet tissue, and sanitary towels or other hand-drying devices. Restroom facilities shall contain appropriate locks for occupant security.
- A telephone must be available to the public.
- Seating capacity for a minimum of 20 patrons and parking for a minimum of ten vehicles, or drive-in service facilities must be provided.
- The facility must be within 1 mile of an interstate highway interchange, or within 5 miles, and not readily visible from a noninterstate highway.

(4) Lodging

- The facility must be licensed by the Washington State Department of Health. Check licensed facilities at <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/facilitysearch/>.
- Facilities signed from an interstate highway must have 12 units or more, each with a private bath.
- Facilities signed from non-interstate highways must have six units or more, each with a private bath.
- A telephone must be available to the public.
- The facility must be within 1 mile of an interstate highway interchange, or within 5 miles, and not readily visible from a noninterstate highway.

(5) Phone

- Phone must be available 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
- The phone must be located within 1 mile of an interstate highway interchange.
- Phone signing is not required if another service near the interchange has met the phone criteria as part of qualification.

(6) Hospital

- Continuous emergency care service must be available, with a doctor on duty, or on immediate call 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
- Written certification of emergency care capability must be obtained from the Washington State Department of Health and provided to the department prior to sign installation.
- The hospital must be located not more than 20 minutes driving time from the interchange or intersection.

- For an area with two or more qualifying hospitals, provide signs to the closest facility, by approach direction, located within 20 minutes driving time from the interchange or intersection.
- Follow-through trailblazer signs are required from the highway to the hospital. They shall be installed and maintained by the local agency.

(7) Emergency Medical Services Facility

- The facility must operate continuously 24 hours per day, seven days per week.
- Written certification of emergency care capability must be obtained from the Washington State Department of Health and provided to the department prior to sign installation.
- The facility must at all times have:
 - A Physician, a Registered Nurse, or a Paramedic on duty.
 - Or, an Emergency Medical Technician on duty, plus a Physician, Registered Nurse, or Paramedic on immediate call.
- Emergency transportation capabilities must be available.
- The facility must be located within 20 minutes driving time of the highway.
- For an area with two or more qualifying emergency care facilities, install signs to the closest facility (by approach direction).
- Do not use the Emergency Medical Services Facility sign if a hospital sign is installed at that intersection or interchange.

(8) Camping

- Must be licensed or approved.
- Campground facilities must be within 5 miles of an interstate highway interchange, or within 8 miles of, and not readily visible from a non-interstate highway.
- Facilities must have at least 20 camping sites, 10 of which will accommodate tents.
- Facilities shall provide free ADA accessible public restrooms with a sink and running water for hand washing, a flush toilet, toilet tissue, and sanitary towels or other hand-drying devices. Restroom facilities shall contain appropriate locks for occupant security.
- Facilities shall provide free potable drinking water and free cups, as necessary, for public use.
- Camp area facilities must be available 24 hours per day with a full-time attendant on duty.
- For seasonal operations, the department removes or covers the sign with a CLOSED plaque during the off season.

(9) Recreational Vehicle Park

- Recreational vehicle parks must be licensed or approved by the appropriate county office.
- Adequate parking must be provided for at least 10 recreational vehicles (camper truck, motor home, or recreational trailer).
- Facilities shall provide free ADA accessible public restrooms with a sink and running water for hand washing, a flush toilet, toilet tissue, and sanitary towels or other hand-drying devices. Restroom facilities shall contain appropriate locks for occupant security.
- Facilities shall provide free potable drinking water and free cups, as necessary for public use.
- All facilities must be available 24 hours per day.
- A telephone must be available to the public.
- The RV Park must be within 5 miles of either an interstate highway interchange or a non-interstate highway.
- For seasonal operations, the department removes or covers the sign with a CLOSED plaque during the off season.

(10) Police (Local or State)

- The law enforcement agency must have an officer on the premises at all times, or a dispatcher on duty with an officer within radio or local telephone contact.
- The law enforcement agency must be located within a reasonable distance from the state highway.

(11) Visitor Information Centers (VIC)

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER (VIC) signs direct the unfamiliar traveler to a facility whose sole function is to provide tourist information and that meets the following criteria:

- The Visitor Information Center must operate a minimum of eight hours per day, seven days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day, or during the months that tourists customarily visit the area. The region traffic engineer may approve different operating hours if the Visitor Center operators can document that a variance is reasonable and justified.
- The VIC must be operated by a nonprofit organization; however, the center may be sponsored by a commercial enterprise. For example, the VIC could be located within a commercial establishment such as a mall or shopping center provided the VIC is visibly separate from the commercial activity.
- Literature and information on visitor attractions must be provided to the public free of charge
- The VIC must have either a full-time attendant on duty during the hours of operation, whose primary duty is to provide visitor information, or a functioning electronic means available to answer visitor questions.

- The VIC must be large enough to accommodate the anticipated number of visitors and provide the necessary display space for material of local and statewide interest.
- Parking space, for both cars and recreational vehicles, must accommodate the expected number of visitors.
- A telephone must be available to the public during operating hours.
- The VIC must be within 1 mile of an interstate highway interchange, or within 5 miles of a non-interstate highway, and not readily visible from it. Follow-through signing is required if the VIC is not visible from the interchange or intersection.
- During hours of operation, the center shall provide free ADA accessible public restroom facilities with a sink and running water for hand washing, a flush toilet, toilet tissue, and sanitary towels or other hand-drying devices. Restroom facilities shall contain appropriate locks for occupant security.
- Facilities shall provide free potable drinking water and free cups for public use.

Only one Visitor Information Center may be signed from an interchange or intersection. Where more than one facility requests signs, work with each to determine which best serves the public. Consider which VIC provides the most complete information, the ease of travel from the highway to the Center, and the amenities of each facility. Request that the signed VIC provide motorists with information including directions to the other.

The VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER sign can be combined with a second message for either a museum, historical, cultural, or recreational attraction, if that attraction meets the appropriate guidelines. The VIC must provide information about the attraction, through an on-premise outdoor kiosk or within the Center.

For seasonal operation, remove the sign or cover with a CLOSED plaque. VIC supplemental signing must meet [MUTCD](#) sign spacing criteria. Where there is not adequate sign space available, a VIC text message plaque may be installed on an existing ground mounted sign.

The department generally provides VIC signing. However, if a Center changes locations within a one or two year period, it may be asked to pay for all relocation costs.

2.19 Other Essential Guide Signs

(1) *Street Name and Advance Street Name Signs*

STREET NAME (D3 Series) signs are useful navigational tools for the roadway user and are installed at roadway intersections. Street name signs are white letters on a green background. Upper and lower case letters are used.

Signs showing the historical street name may be used in conjunction with a current street name sign. All costs associated with the historic street name shall be the responsibility of the local agency making the request.

In urban areas, STREET NAME signs are installed at the intersection. For significant cross streets, channelized intersections, and at signalized intersections, ADVANCE STREET NAME signs should also be installed. Place them 200 feet or more in advance of intersections to alert motorists to the upcoming roadway and the possibility of turns or lane changes, etc. A directional chevron may be used on the street name sign indicating the direction of the side street.

In rural areas, where a county road intersects the state highway, a STREET NAME sign identifying the state route is installed above the state installed STOP sign. The county is responsible for the original installation, and the department maintains these signs.

Where ADVANCE INTERSECTION WARNING signs are used, (primarily in rural or suburban areas) it is WSDOT policy to install the black on yellow ROAD NAME (D3-201) sign above or below the INTERSECTION WARNING sign.

On city streets that are part of state highways, the local agency shall install and maintain street signs within the corporate limits ([RCW 47.24.020](#)).

Use this table to determine appropriate letter size for street name signs:

Roadway Type	Single or Multilane	Single Lane	Single Lane	Multilane	Multilane	Signal Mast Arm
Posted Speed Limit (mph)	25	30–45	50+	30–40	45+	N/A
Street Name Letter Size	4"/3"	6"/4.5"	6"/4.5"	6"/4.5"	8"/6"	12"/9" #
Advance Street Name Letter Size	6"/4.5"*	6"/4.5"	6"/4.5"	6"/4.5"	8"/6"	N/A
Fabrication Number	D3-101 D3-102	D3-101 D3-102 D3-103 D3-201 D3-301 D3-302** D3-401	D3-101 D3-102 D3-103 D3-201 D3-301 D3-302** D3-401	D3-101 D3-102 D3-103 D3-201 D3-301 D3-302** D3-401	D3-101 D3-102 D3-201 D3-301 D3-302** D3-401	<u>D3-401</u>

*Use only at urban signalized intersections and channelized intersections with exclusive turn lanes.

**Use at Advance Street Name sign installations only.

#For posted speed limits less than 40 mph, 8"/6" letter heights may be used.

Table 2-9

(2) Canadian Customs

Several Canadian Customs border crossing stations have limited hours of operation and are closed to motorists outside these hours. For these crossing stations, install signing to inform motorists of the hours of operation and locate the signs to provide them an opportunity to find an alternate route or to delay their crossing. Place the sign in advance of the closest exit before the border where overnight accommodations are available.

Canadian Customs at 24-hour border crossings do not need advance signing showing hours of operation.

(3) City and County Entrance

The department is responsible for installing CITY and COUNTY ENTRANCE signs (I2-201/301) on state highways ([RCW 47.36.120](#)). The signs shall be white on green. These signs are placed at city and county boundary limits and are different than CITY ENTRANCE MARKERS discussed in Section 2.18(3).

Instead of the standard ENTRANCE (I2-201/I2-301) sign, the city or county may supply and maintain a sign with a political jurisdiction logo, per the [MUTCD](#).

(4) Unincorporated Community

COMMUNITY ENTRANCE signs (I2-301) may be installed on each non-limited access state highway approach to an unincorporated community that includes:

- A United States Postal Service office.
- At least two motorist services, which may be any combination of gas, food, or lodging.

Supplemental destination guide signing to the community may be considered if it is within 10 miles from a rural state highway interchange or intersection. Do not install destination signing to unincorporated communities from an urban area interchange.

(5) City Center

Historically, the department has provided CITY CENTER signs at the request of local governments, to direct motorists to local government buildings (i.e., city hall, courthouse). Currently, requests for CITY CENTER signs often come from local business communities to direct motorists to business areas within a city. CITY CENTER signing requests should include the following information:

- Description and location of all city center exits within the corporate limits.
- The interchange or intersection name of the proposed sign location.
- Verification of local agency agreement on the location of the city center.

When reviewing CITY CENTER signing requests, conduct a field review to determine the effectiveness and feasibility of sign locations and confirm other details of the request letter. Include the local government, business community, and other interested groups to assure agreement on the location of the city center.

All costs for sign fabrication and installation are the responsibility of the city making the signing request.

(6) Milepost Markers

MILEPOST MARKERS are numbered location markers installed along all state highways and used primarily for reference purposes. The Statewide Travel and Collision Data Office establishes each milepost location, which is signed with a MILEPOST MARKER in accordance with the following criteria (adopted from rescinded department Directive D32-20).

- On two-lane roadways, install the double-faced MILEPOST MARKER (D10-101, D10-102, and D10-103) on the right side of the roadway, in the direction of increasing milepost.
- On multilane highways, install the single faced MILEPOST MARKER (D10-1, D10-2, and D10-3) for each roadway direction, on the right side of the roadway.
- MILEPOST MARKERS on spur routes display the letter “S” below the mileage figure.
- MILEPOST MARKERS must be installed within 50 feet of their designated location. If that is not physically possible, do not install that MILEPOST MARKER.

When a milepost marker is relocated it must be documented in the Traffic Sign Maintenance System (TSMS). Headquarters Traffic supplies this information to the Roadway Data Office annually so the milepost marker can be accurately relocated in the State Highway Log. See [Standard Plan G-10.10-00](#) and [G20.10-00](#) for installation details.

(7) Highway and Freeway Entrance

Install the HIGHWAY ENTRANCE sign (E12-101) on two-lane two-way undivided highways where interchanges are provided at intersecting crossroads. Install signs on both sides of the on-ramp, facing approaching traffic, to clearly identify the entrance to the on-ramp.

Install the FREEWAY ENTRANCE sign (E12-201) on both sides of each freeway or expressway on-ramp, facing approaching traffic, to identify the ramp entrance.

(8) Other Agencies

Consider installation of supplemental guide signs to facilities of other federal, state and local agencies when space is available per the [MUTCD](#). Sign colors are determined by the type of sign destination (recreation, emergency, or direction).

- **Department of Natural Resources Campgrounds** – White letters on brown background.
- **State Patrol** – White letters on blue background.
- **State Public Fishing Areas** – White letters on brown background.
- **Government Fish Hatcheries Open to the Public** – White letters on green background.
- **Department of Corrections Facilities** – White letters on green background.

2.20 Miscellaneous Signing

(1) *Adopt-a-Highway*

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY (AAH) signs are installed to recognize both volunteer groups and businesses that sponsor litter pick up or other roadside enhancement activities as part of the AAH program. The program is administered through the Headquarters Maintenance Office, with regional coordinators assigning locations to groups. Adopted roadside sections can include one or both sides of the roadway.

AAH signs are placed at or near the beginning of an adopted section. Lateral placement of the AAH signs may be up to 50 feet from the edge of the travel lane, if right of way is available and the signs are still visible from the traveled lanes. All AAH signs mounted on the same post must be the same width. The name displayed on the AAH recognition sign shall be the official name of the organization, individuals, or business sponsoring the section and must be pre-approved by the department.

Volunteer adoption sections are signed as follows:

- Sections adopted by volunteer groups are signed using I6-901, I6-901A, I6-902, I6-902A, I6-904, and I6-905A signs.
- If the section includes both directions of travel, install signs for each.
- On divided highways, AAH signs are installed on the right shoulder only.

Sponsored adoption sections are signed as follows:

- Sections adopted by businesses are signed using an I6-906 sign.
- On divided highways, AAH signs may be installed on either the median or the right shoulder.
- The sponsor's logo/name plaque is provided to the region for WSDOT installation on the AAH sign. The plaque will be an 0.050 inch aluminum overlay.
- Size requirements are a maximum of three lines, with 20 spaces per line. If a sponsor's name will not fit within the sign width, the letter height will be reduced until it can.

AAH recognition signs may also be installed for special enhancement projects such as landscaping at interchanges, or other areas. In these cases, the smaller sign shall be used and the region traffic engineer shall determine sign placement on a case-by-case basis.

Spacing between AAH signs and other traffic control signs shall conform to [MUTCD](#) Section 2H.08. AAH signs are shown in [Appendices 2-25](#) and [2-26](#).

(2) DUI Victim Memorial

The Headquarters Traffic Office administers the DUI Victim Memorial signing program and approves all locations for signing. Refer citizen requests for Victim Memorial signs to the Headquarters Traffic Office.

Install the PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE (I20-201) sign with the IN MEMORY OF (I20-203) or SPONSORED BY (I20-204) plaque at approved locations.

Specific sign locations are determined on an individual basis during the review of the sign request. In general, along non-interstate highways, one sign is installed for each direction of travel. Install the sign near the physical crash location, while considering sign spacing, sight distance, and other factors that may preclude using the exact crash site.

For the Interstate system, one sign is installed along the on-ramp nearest to the collision scene, in the direction of travel that the collision occurred.

Information on the Victim Memorial program is available at www.wsdot.wa.gov/operations/traffic/signs/duisign.htm.

(3) City/Community Entrance Markers

WSDOT may allow cities or communities, either by permit or agreement, to construct and maintain city/community entrance beautification areas on state highway right of way. The agreement may include a CITY or COMMUNITY ENTRANCE MARKER.

On a state highway, one ENTRANCE MARKER may be installed for each direction of travel near where it enters a city or community. Any landscaping associated with the marker shall be in compliance with the WSDOT [Roadside Classification Plan](#) M 25-31, and approved by the region Landscape Architect.

An ENTRANCE MARKER for a neighborhood community that lies within the corporate limits of a city or town may be allowed if the city or town approves the neighborhood's marker. This marker will count as one of the two allowed per city or town.

An ENTRANCE MARKER visible to any state highway must meet these guidelines:

- Be simple, dignified, and devoid of advertising.
- Be positioned so it is not a roadside safety hazard, is not likely to be struck by an errant vehicle, and is not an obstruction to sight distance.
- Shall not interfere with, nor distract from any existing or future traffic control or safety device.
- Any lighting associated with the marker shall comply with [RCW 47.36.180](#).
- Be sponsored by the city or a community group in which it is located.

The city or community group is responsible for maintaining the marker and any associated landscaping. Inadequate maintenance of either, as determined by the department, may result in marker removal.

If a highway project (such as roadway widening) will displace an ENTRANCE MARKER, the city or community group is responsible for relocating and/or removing it. Markers not relocated shall be removed by WSDOT, with removal and disposal costs billed to the city or community group.

- (a) **Entrance Markers on Limited Access Highways** – The total marker area shall not exceed 100 square feet, and the message area shall not exceed approximately 60 square feet. At highway interchanges, the marker must be oriented so it can be read by the motorist leaving the ramp and not by the motorist on the highway mainline.

Non-Profit Service Club Plaques (i.e., Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary) may not be installed on ENTRANCE MARKERS within limited access highways. These signs are considered to be Type (1)(c) signs and are regulated under the Scenic Vistas Act ([RCW 47.42](#) and [WAC 468-66](#)).

1. **Interstate** – ENTRANCE MARKERS installed on Interstate right of way require FHWA approval. The State Traffic Engineer reviews the design and placement of city ENTRANCE MARKER requests on interstate roadways before recommending approval to the FHWA. If approved, the marker is placed between the interchange ramp and the right of way line, in the area of the ramp terminal with the connecting city street, and not visible to mainline traffic.
2. **Non-Interstate** – The region traffic engineer approves the design and placement of the marker on non-interstate routes. If there are any deviations from the guidelines above, the design must be submitted to the State Traffic Engineer for approval. For undivided highways, the marker is placed just inside corporate limits, or at the far side of an intersection located inside corporate limits.

- (b) **Entrance Markers on Non-Limited Access Highways** – The total marker size shall not exceed 150 square feet, including the border and trim, and service club plaques. The service club plaque area of the sign shall not be disproportional to the marker message. The maximum size for each service club plaque is 24" x 24".

Non-Profit Service Club Plaques (i.e., Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary) may be installed on a city ENTRANCE MARKER along a state highway if the marker is located within corporate limits and is not within a limited access area. These signs are considered to be Type (1)(b) signs and are regulated by the Scenic Vistas Act ([RCW 47.42](#) and [WAC 468-66](#)).

The region traffic engineer shall approve the design and placement of the marker. If there are any deviations from the guidelines, the design and placement must be submitted to the State Traffic Engineer for approval.

Install the city ENTRANCE MARKER inside the city limits, beyond the curb line or outside edge of the roadway. ENTRANCE MARKERS for unincorporated communities may be considered for placement on state highway right of way. The marker must be located beyond the clear zone if it does not meet break-away standards.

(4) Carpool Information

CARPOOL INFORMATION signs (D12-201, D12-202) may be installed along conventional two-lane roads, on-ramps to multilane highways, and in park and ride lots. They should not be placed on the mainline of multilane facilities. Transit logos may be included in the sign design in accordance with [MUTCD Section 2D-48](#). These signs are considered incidental and can be removed if sign space is needed for a higher priority sign.

The requesting agency is responsible for sign fabrication and initial installation costs. WSDOT is responsible for the sign maintenance.

Sign spacing:

- Use a 300-foot spacing between signs on conventional two-lane, high-speed roadways.
- Use 150-foot spacing for freeway on-ramps, and for both multilane and two-lane, low-speed roadways in incorporated areas.

(5) Commercial Dump Prohibition

Some rest areas along state highways provide Recreation Vehicle dump stations for use by noncommercial vehicles. Install the COMMERCIAL VEHICLE USE PROHIBITED (I8-704) sign in the rest area at these RV dump sites. This is the only valid application for this sign on state highways.

(6) Fire District Boundary

The ENTERING FIRE DISTRICT and LEAVING FIRE DISTRICT signs (I8-804) may be installed at Fire District boundaries along state highways using these guidelines:

- Upon region approval, signs shall be installed and maintained by the jurisdiction requesting the sign(s). A General Permit issued by the area maintenance office is required.
- Signs should be installed at the district boundary, if possible, or no further than 1,000 feet from the boundary.
- Signs may be placed away from the roadway near the edge of the right of way. They shall not obstruct a driver's view or constitute a hazard by their location.
- Mounting posts shall be of wood, no larger than 4 inches x 4 inches, or they may be perforated square steel. Mounting height shall be 7 feet to the bottom of the sign.
- The sign color shall be white letters on blue background.
- A jurisdictional logo may be included on the sign.

(7) Fire Danger Information

FIRE DANGER INFORMATION signs (with arrow indicator) are requested or sponsored by either the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or the local fire district authority who submits a written request to the region Traffic Office.

DNR or the fire district shall be responsible for the sign fabrication, installation, and maintenance costs, as well as for the daily message changes. WSDOT can fabricate and/or install the sign via a J Agreement, or the fire district can fabricate and install the sign if the department approves. A General Permit issued through the area maintenance office is required.

The fire district must agree to properly maintain the sign and to cover it during the winter when there is no fire danger, or to replace the sign when the message or colors begin to fade or fail.

Signs are not allowed on Interstate right of way. Install the FIRE DANGER sign at or near the right of way line. If the sign is within the clear zone, it must have appropriate safety breakaway features. Mounting posts shall be of wood, no larger than 4 inches x 4 inches, or they may be perforated square steel. Mounting height shall be 7 feet to the bottom of the sign.

(8) Fire Hydrant Marker

FIRE HYDRANT MARKER (I7-401) signs may be installed on limited access highways to help fire department personnel locate fire hydrants that are outside of the right of way. The sign shall be placed parallel to, and facing the roadway. The sign shall be visible from the shoulder, mounted either on the right of way fence or on a post, and shall display the distance from the edge of traveled way to the fire hydrant. If requested by the fire department, a 24-inch plaque may be added below the sign to indicate the nearest street or intersection.

The region traffic engineer shall contact local fire departments to determine signing needs for fire hydrants located near limited access highways. The department is responsible for installing and maintaining these signs.

(9) Apple Maggot

Many people carry homegrown fruit throughout the state without realizing that they may also be transporting harmful pests, such as the apple maggot, thereby increasing the insects' range. Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) established specific geographical boundaries where the transport of homegrown fruit is prohibited. At their request, signs were installed at several locations throughout the state in an effort to stop the transport of homegrown fruit. Sign fabrication, installation, and maintenance costs are paid for by WSDA through an Interagency Agreement. Contact Headquarters Traffic before replacing any apple maggot signs. Signs locations and messages are:

State Borders and Quarantine Area Borders	"Entering/Leaving apple maggot quarantine area"
Within Quarantine Areas	"Do not transport homegrown fruit"

(10) Landscape and Vegetation Acknowledgement

Community, local groups, or businesses sometimes install and/or maintain landscaping or vegetation plantings within state highway right of way, generally as part of beautification of a community entrance. A General Permit issued by the department is required.

One sign acknowledging the group may be allowed as described below:

- The sign design, including size, message layout, color, and sign fabrication material is submitted to the region Traffic Office for review and approval.
- Sign size is limited to 3 feet x 3 feet; letter size is limited to 2 inches. This is not considered a highway sign and is not intended to be read by motorists.
- The sign shall not contain any advertising or service club information, or resemble a city/community entrance sign.
- The sign is installed at or near the right of way line. On limited access facilities, the sign is placed between the ramp and right of way line, and not visible to mainline traffic.
- The sign sponsor shall be notified and instructed to replace the sign when needed. The sign shall be removed if it is not replaced in a timely manner.
- When the General Permit expires without renewal, or the landscaping/vegetation is no longer maintained, the sign shall be removed.

(11) Limited Access

For state highways that operate with intermittent access control, install ENTERING LIMITED ACCESS AREA (I2-601) and LEAVING LIMITED ACCESS AREA (I2-701) signs in accordance with [RCW 47.52.110](#). Fully controlled limited access highways do not need signs.

(12) Litter Control

Install LITTER AND IT WILL HURT signs (I6-102) in areas where littering is a common problem and where a minimum sign spacing of 300 feet is available. Use the appropriate logo below the sign:

- Install the THROWING AWAY BURNING MATERIAL PROHIBITED (I6-301) sign in areas where fire hazards are known to be high.
- Install the DEPOSIT LITTER ____ MILE (I6-101) sign in advance of the deposit site.
- The LITTER (I6-201) symbol sign should be located at the litter barrel site, facing approaching traffic.
- Install the AUTOMOBILE LITTER ONLY (I6-801) sign adjacent to the litter barrel. This sign is intended to discourage the deposit of litter that is not normally accumulated by a motorist.

Note: The litter symbol is a registered trademark. All signs utilizing the symbol shall have a small ® located near the lower right corner of the symbol.

(13) Post Offices

Post offices may be signed from state highways in unincorporated areas if the post office is not visible from the state highway and there is a demonstrated need for the sign (D1-101). Cities or towns may sign for post offices inside incorporated limits.

(14) Private Roads

WSDOT does not supply, fabricate, install, or maintain STOP signs or STREET NAME signs for private roadways that intersect with state highways. Citizens may install their own signs at such intersections, in accordance with the [MUTCD](#), and working with the area Maintenance Superintendent. A general permit is required when a STOP sign or private ROAD NAME sign is installed on WSDOT right of way at a private road approach. The citizen requesting the sign must secure the permit and coordinate installation details with the area Maintenance Superintendent. Maintenance for private road signs is the responsibility of the citizen installing the signs.

Private road name signs (D3-104) shall be fabricated in accordance with the [Sign Fabrication Manual](#) and must indicate the road is private either by a sign header or by words (“Private” or “PVT”) on the sign. White letters on a green background is the preferred color but a local jurisdiction may determine that white on blue or black on white are acceptable.

(15) Refuse Station

REFUSE STATION signing may be installed under the following conditions:

- The site must be county or city owned and open to the general public. Private refuse stations will not be signed.
- The site must be a major refuse station, not just a drop-off location.
- Signs are not installed on any freeway facility.
- The refuse station must be located within ½ mile of the state highway.
- Use the word “Refuse” instead of the word “Transfer” to avoid possible confusion with transportation hub centers that may also be called Transfer stations. The word “Garbage” is not used.
- The REFUSE STATION sign shall be a 24 inch x 24 inch white on green plaque.
- Install the plaque below any ground mounted guide or information sign at the intersection. If there are no signs, the plaque may be placed on its own sign post.
- A city or county may install a REFUSE STATION sign on its right of way at an intersection, instead of a highway sign. The sign would be considered a Type 1 sign under the Scenic Vistas Act ([WAC 468-66-050](#)).

(16) Salmon and Other Fish

WSDOT receives requests from fish related user groups to sign a stream or body of water with a specific fish related message. Signs related to preserving the fish habitat may be installed along a state highway; however, only one type of fish related sign will be allowed for a location. Where several user groups (i.e., salmon, steelhead, or trout) request signing in a location, suggest that they work together to develop a single fish related sign message and to seek support from the local jurisdiction. An overall signing plan with support documentation should be submitted to the region Traffic Office, preferably by the local jurisdiction or by an official organization or agency.

- The stream crossing or body of water must be year round.
- Multiple signs, supported, endorsed, or maintained by different user groups (i.e., salmon, steelhead, and trout) will not be allowed.
- The requesting user group is responsible for the sign fabrication, installation costs, and all maintenance and replacement costs. A J account can be set up to administer the funds. Sign installation and removal will be by WSDOT personnel.
- Sign size will be 18" x 24", 24" x 24", or 24" x 36", dependant on the fish logo and line message approved by WSDOT.
- Sign colors are white letters on a blue background.

(17) Water Crossing

A STREAM NAME or WATER CROSSING (I3-101) sign may be installed on a state roadway to identify a body of water that traverses or parallels a state highway, using these guidelines:

- The body of water must be identified by name on a USGS map.
- If the body of water traverses the highway, the water way must be bridged by a highway structure. A single culvert crossing or a seasonal stream does not qualify for a sign.
- Sign color shall be white on green.
- Maximum sign height is 24"; the sign width is variable.
- On conventional roadways, letter height is 6" upper case and 4½" lower case letters.
- On expressways or freeways, letter height is 8" upper case and 6" lower case letters.

(18) Water Related Signs NOT to Be Installed

The following water related signs shall not be installed on any state highway:

- Conservation District Boundary Area
- Drainage Basin

- Drinking and Ground Water Management Area
- Groundwater Protection Region or Area
- Groundwater Conservation Region or Area
- Surface Water Management Area
- Watershed Signs (this includes entering/leaving signs)
- Wellhead Protection Area

These signs do not assist motorists in their driving, but can be treated as Type 1 signs ([WAC 468-66-050](#)) and installed off the state right of way. Type 1 signs must be supported by an official agency or organization.

(19) Watchable Wildlife

The WILDLIFE VIEWING (D5-907) signs may be installed for locations that are open to the public and within 10 miles of the state highway. Install the sign on the highway exit or intersection nearest the viewing area. Use the BINOCULARS symbol sign for a trailblazer and for site identification if no other signing is posted. Signs are white on a brown background.

(20) Evacuation Route

Install EVACUATION ROUTE (I25-101, I25-201) symbol signs to indicate the route that people should follow to leave an area when a tsunami, volcanic eruption, fire, or other hazard is threatening. Region Traffic Offices are to coordinate the location of Evacuation Route signs with City, County, or Tribal Emergency Management personnel.

2.21 Variable Message Signs

Variable Message Signs (VMS) are traffic control devices designed to display diverse messages to alert roadway users about specific conditions or situations. VMS are part of WSDOT's Traffic Management System and are operated by each region Traffic Management Center (TMC).

VMS are located on many highways throughout the state. Some are used exclusively to provide information about variable speed limits, lane use restrictions, active traffic management, or traction requirements. Others may provide information about:

- Traffic incident information.
- Traffic restrictions or emergency conditions.
- Special event related traffic impact information.
- Upcoming road closures or other impacts.

Operation of the Variable Message Signs is coordinated by the region's TMC and is governed by the Variable Message Sign Use Procedures at www.wsdot.wa.gov/maintops/traffic/pdf/vmsusepolicy.pdf.

2.22 Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) and Traveler Information Station (TIS) Signing

HAR and TIS systems are low power AM radio stations installed to provide the traveling public with traffic alerts or traveler information. They are sometimes used in conjunction with a Variable Message Sign (VMS). Both HAR and TIS installations must comply with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirements and must be approved by and coordinated through the WSDOT ITS and Communications office. HAR and TIS system messages are governed by the HAR/TIS procedures which can be found at wwwi.wsdot.wa.gov/maintops/traffic/pdf/harpolicy.pdf.

HAR and TIS signs are secondary to official traffic control signs (i.e., regulatory and warning signs, guide signs) and are installed only when MUTCD and WSDOT sign spacing requirements can be met.

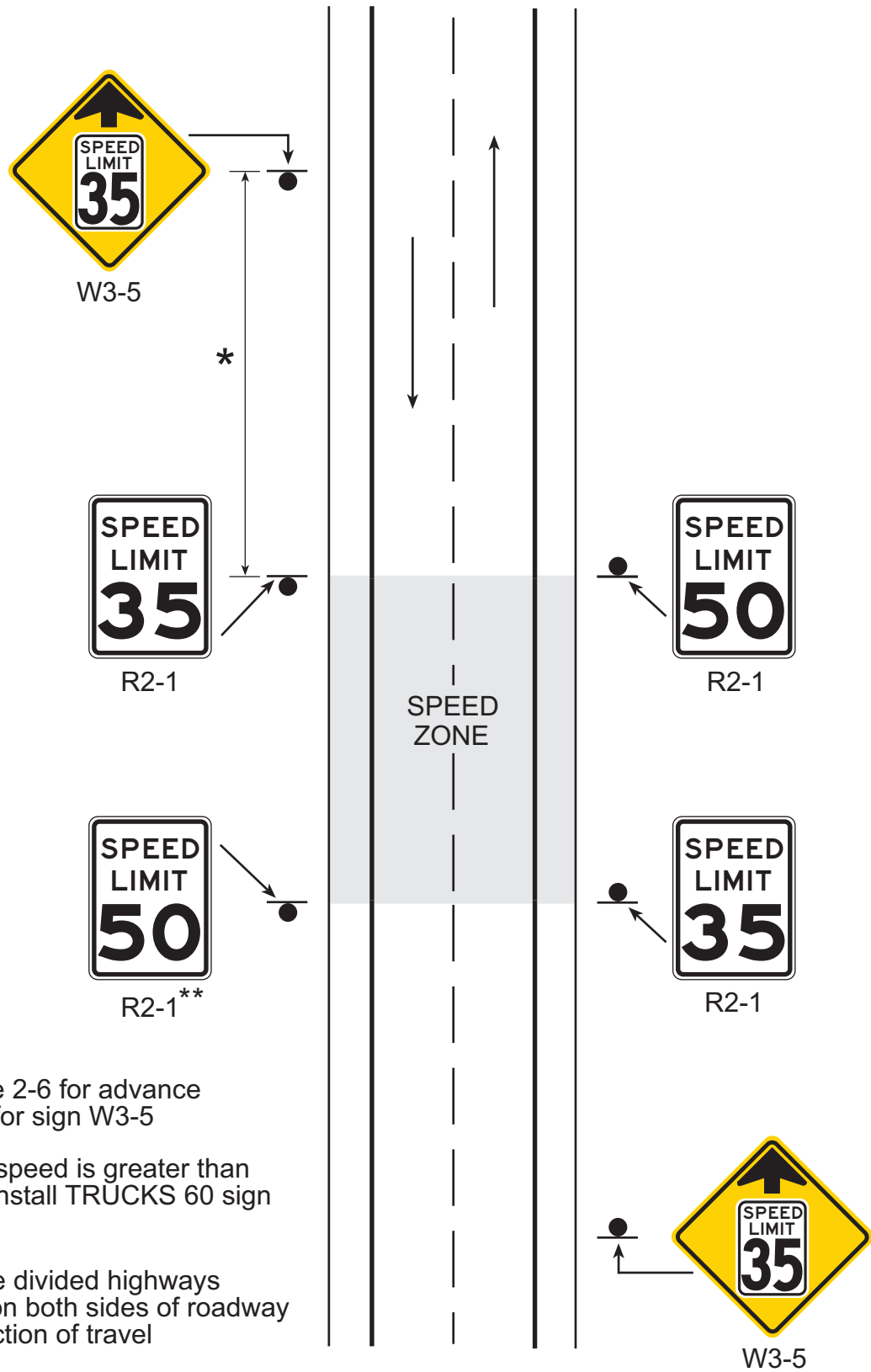
(1) Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) System Signs

- Install a TRAFFIC ADVISORY TUNE XX AM WHEN FLASHING (I35-101) at each HAR location.
- Install flashing beacons above the sign to be activated by the TMC when some message types are being broadcast.
- HAR signs, Traffic Alert/Traffic Advisory signs, and Mountain Pass Information/Road Conditions signs shall be a non-reflective black legend on a reflective yellow background.

(2) Traveler Information Signs (TIS)

TIS systems give tourist and recreational information.

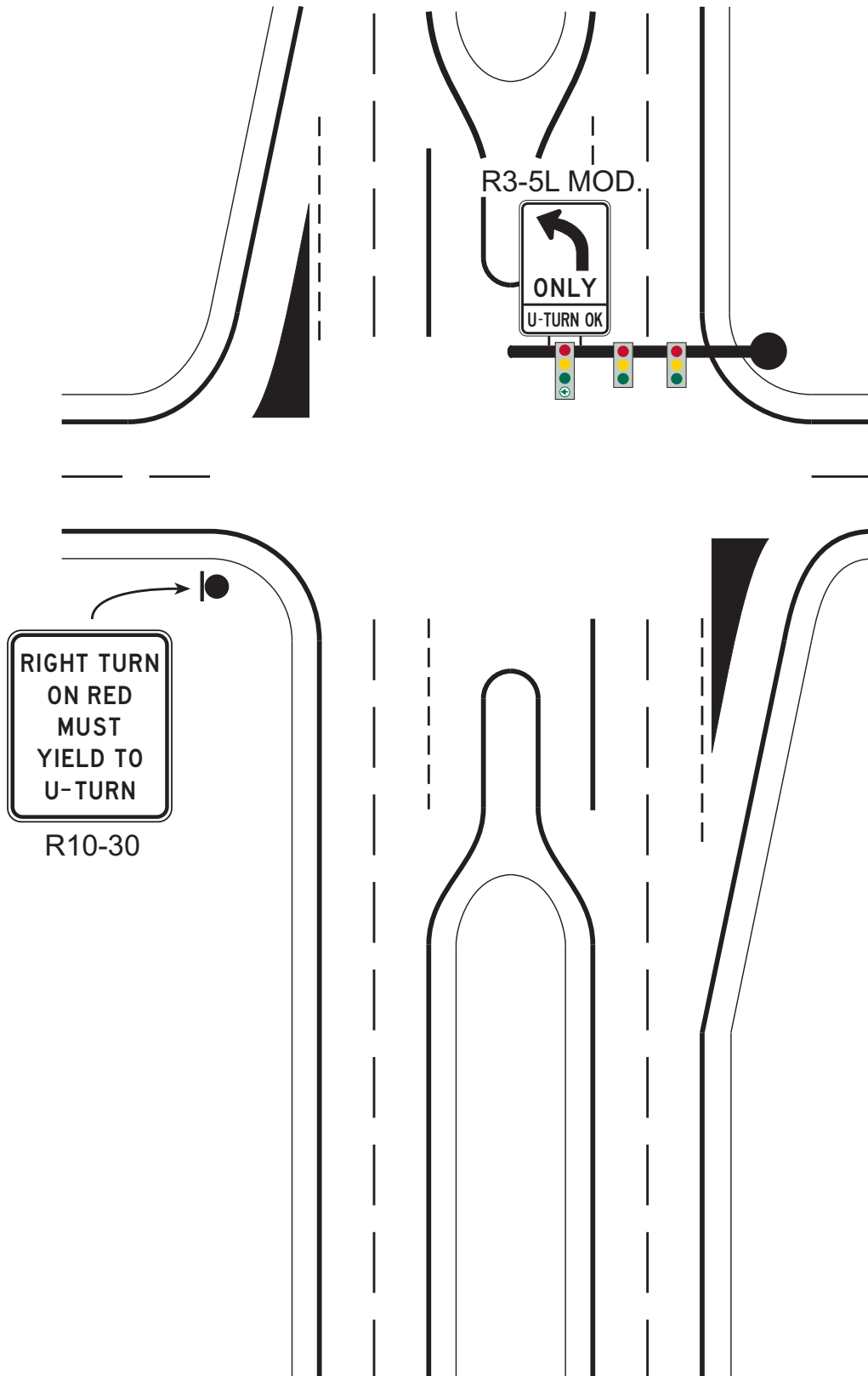
- Install a “TRAVEL INFORMATION TUNE (XXXX) AM” at any TIS location.
- The sign shall be a reflective white legend on a reflective blue background, with the exceptions of TIS signs for recreation in National Parks, National Forests, and National Historic Reserves. These are the **ONLY** TIS signs that may be a white reflective legend on a brown reflective background. As well, these agencies may incorporate their official agency logo on the TIS sign.
- When the preemptive message EMERGENCY INFO WHEN FLASHING is included in the TIS sign, it shall be a non-reflective black message on a reflective yellow background. Flashing beacons shall be installed to be activated by the TMC when emergency messages are being broadcast.
- All TIS sign fabrication, installation, and maintenance costs are the responsibility of the requesting agency. Signs will be fabricated to WSDOT standards and may only be installed by WSDOT crews.

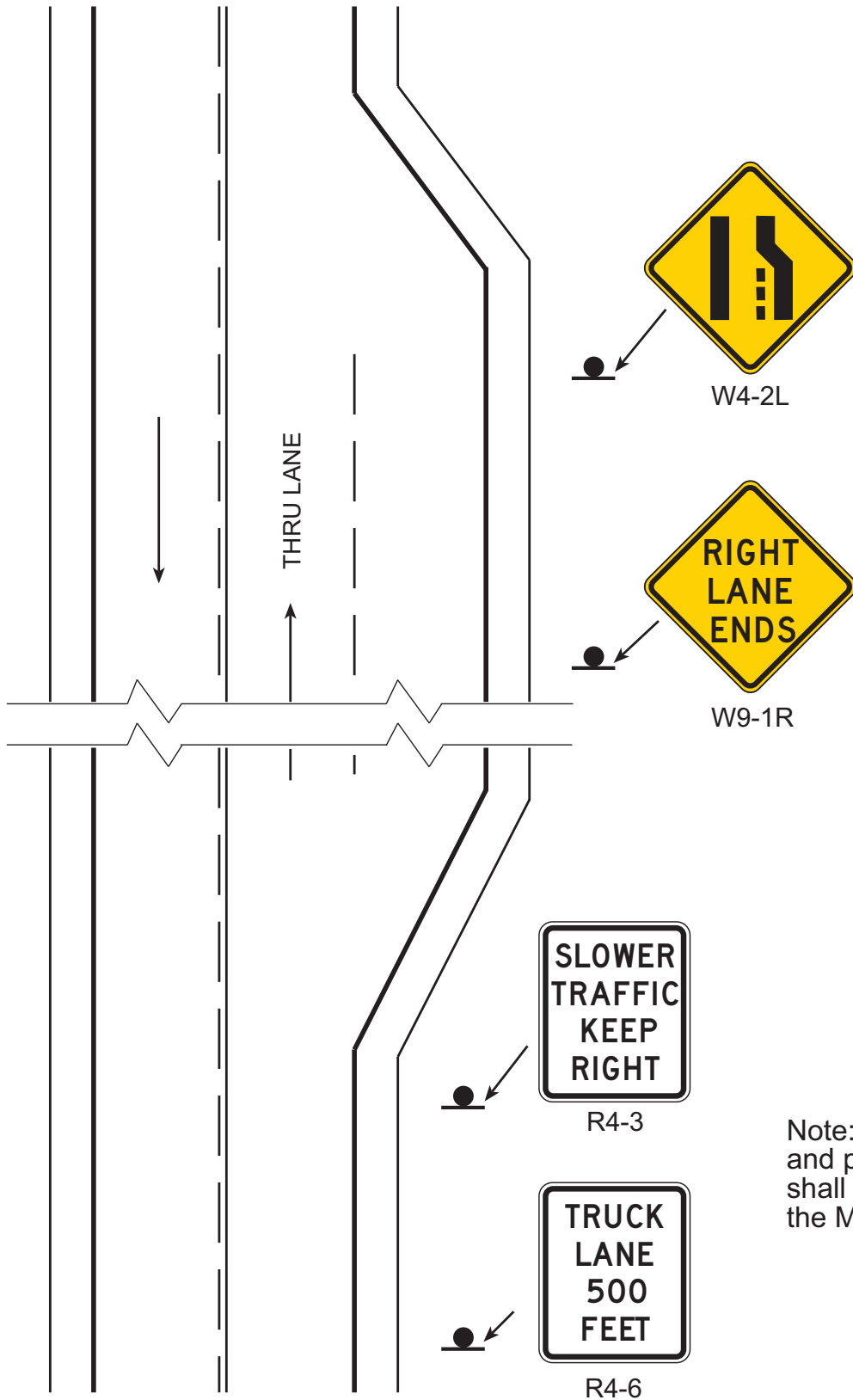


Notes:

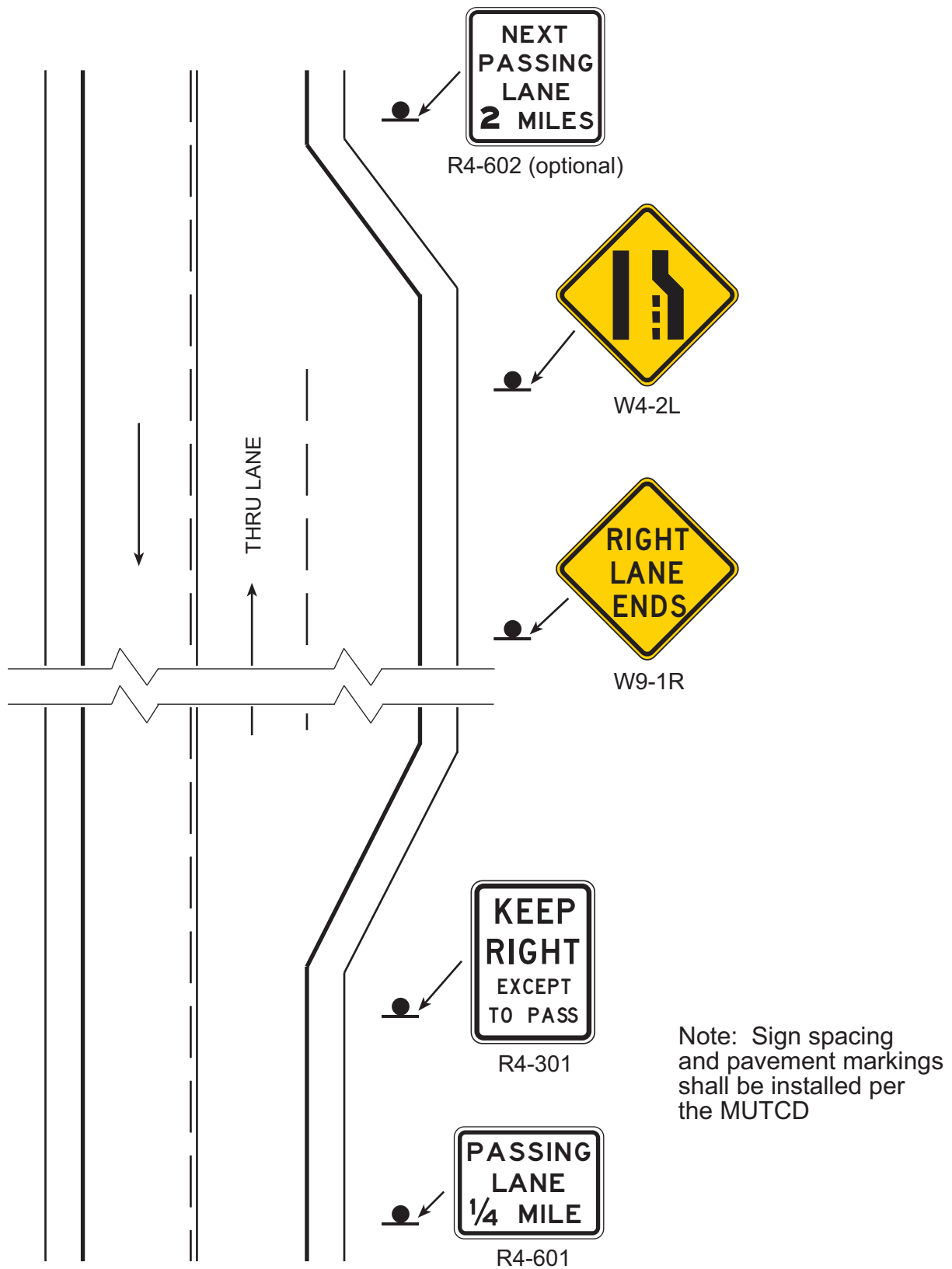
- * See Table 2-6 for advance distance for sign W3-5
- ** If posted speed is greater than 60 mph, install TRUCKS 60 sign (R2-2)

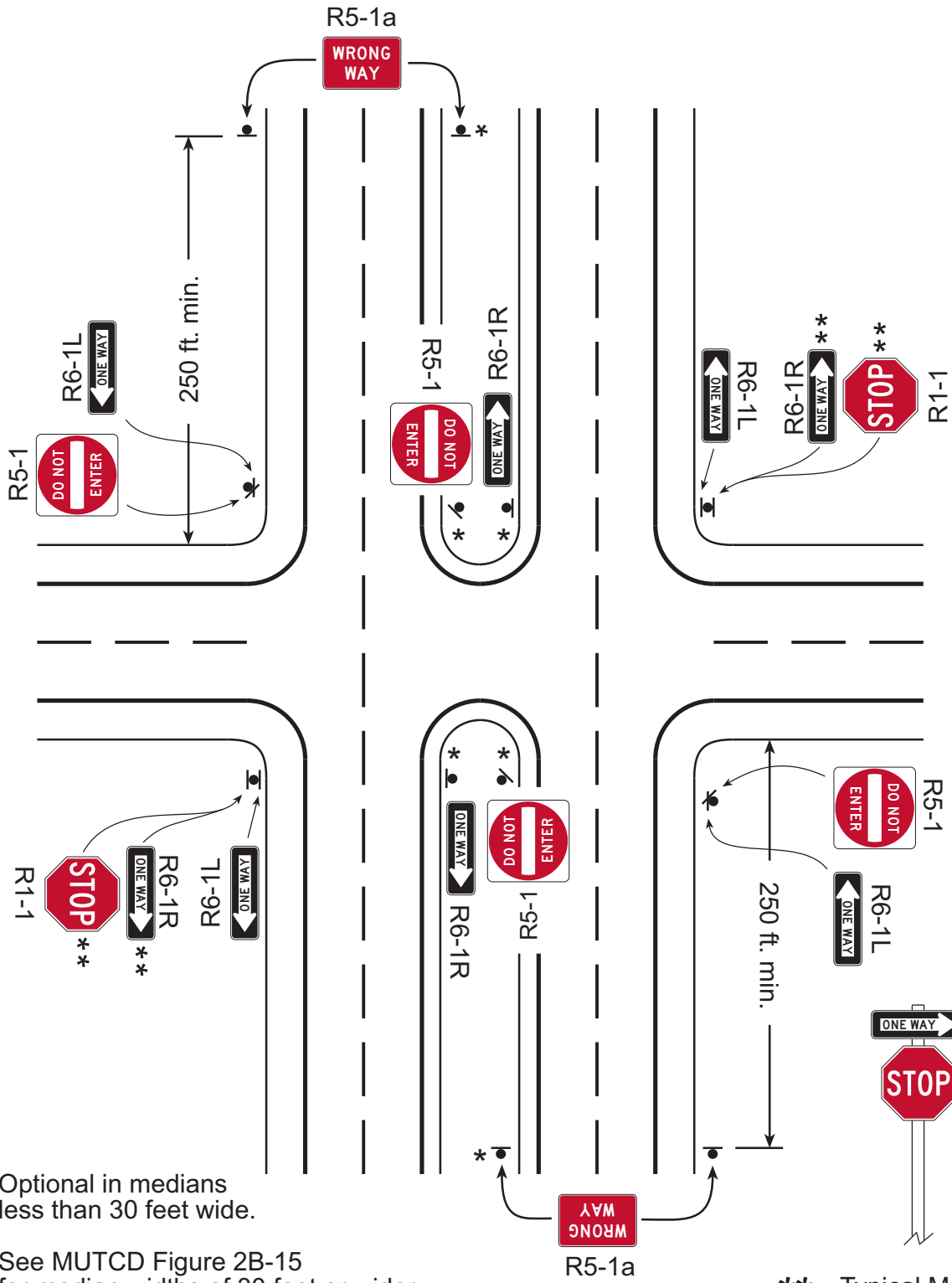
For multi-lane divided highways install signs on both sides of roadway for each direction of travel





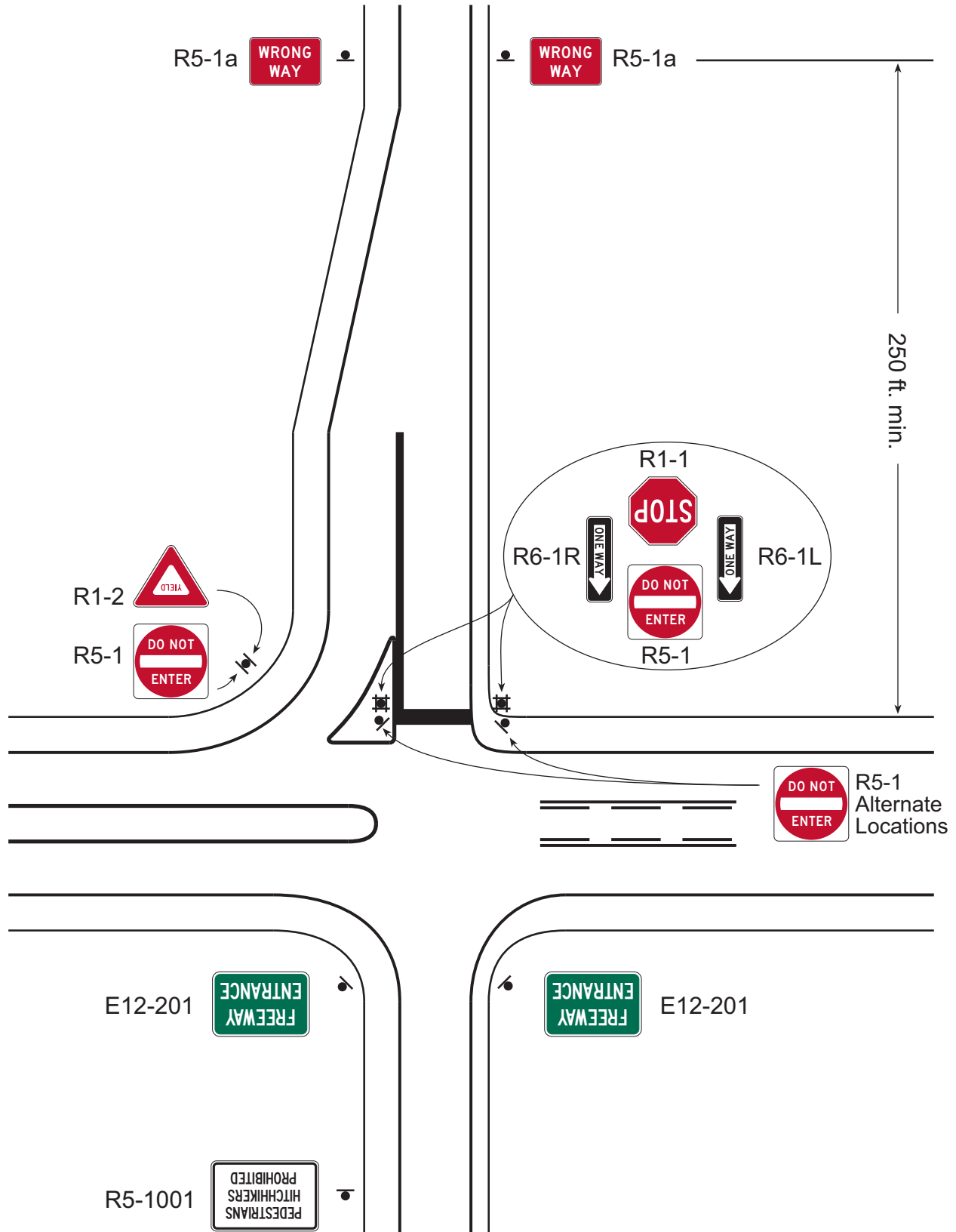
Note: Sign spacing and pavement markings shall be installed per the MUTCD

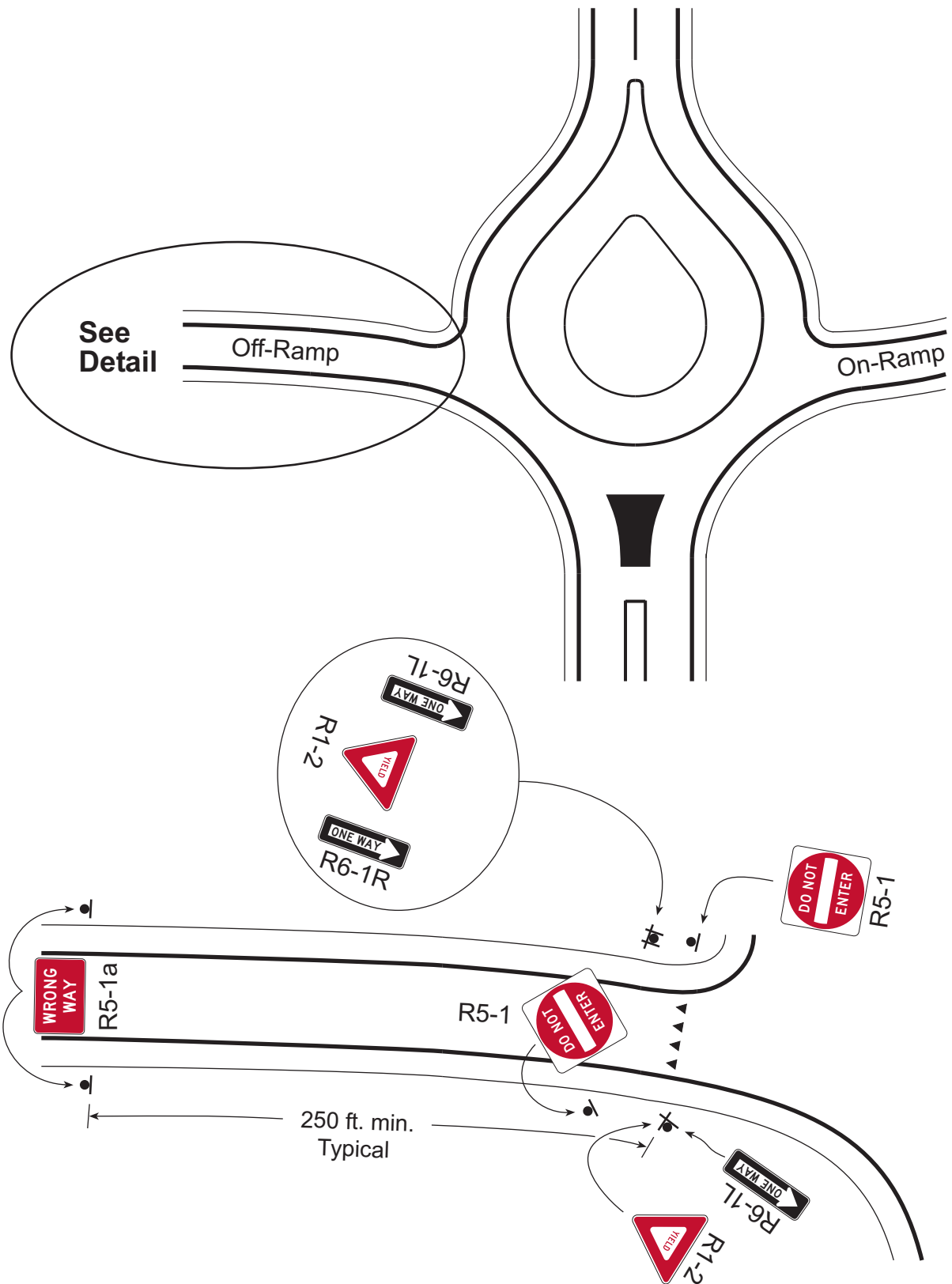




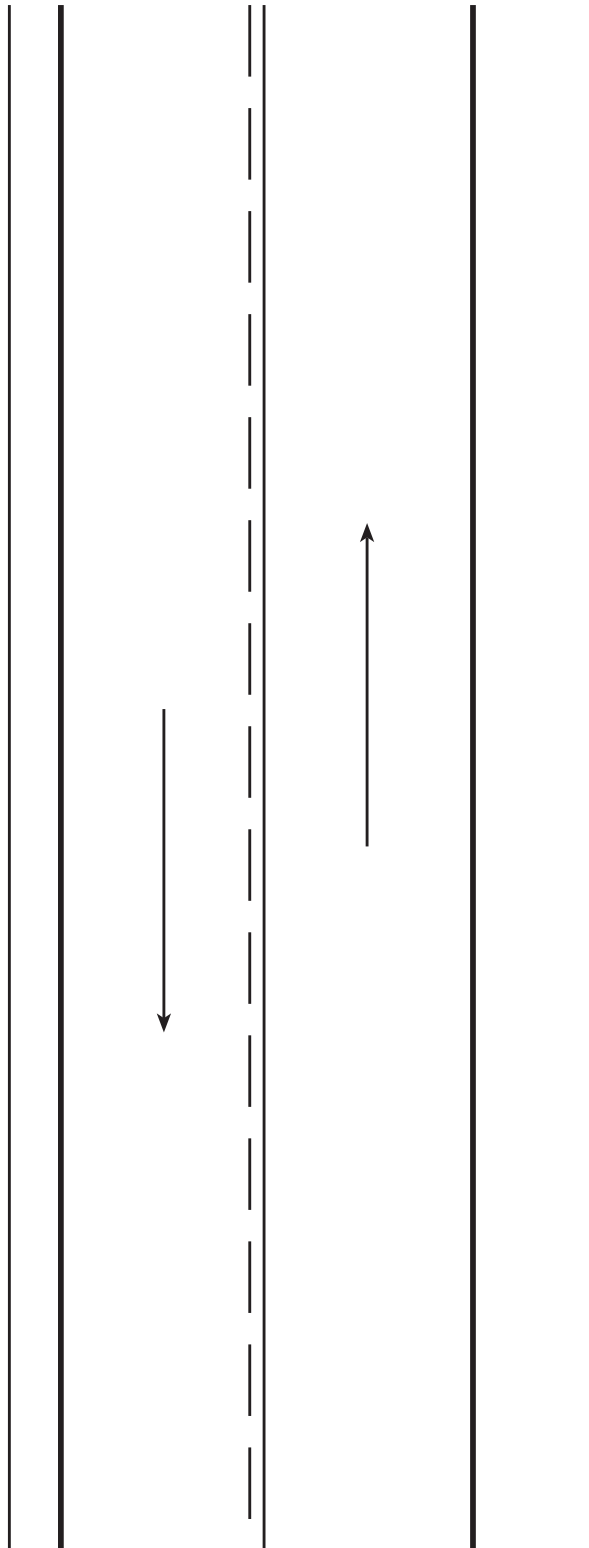
* Optional in medians less than 30 feet wide.
See MUTCD Figure 2B-15 for median widths of 30 feet or wider.

** Typical Mounting





Note: Sign spacing and pavement markings shall be installed per the MUTCD



18-601



18-501

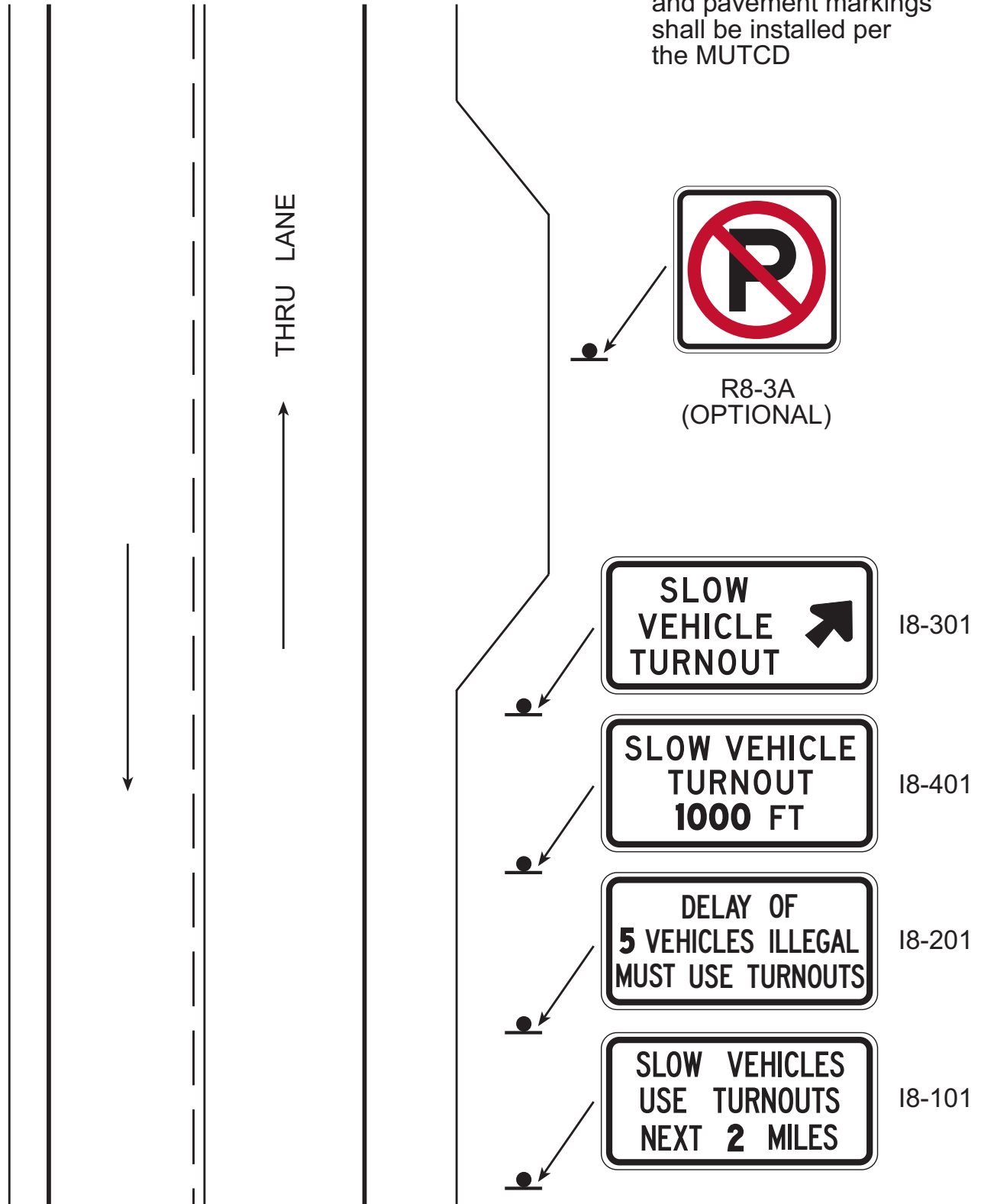


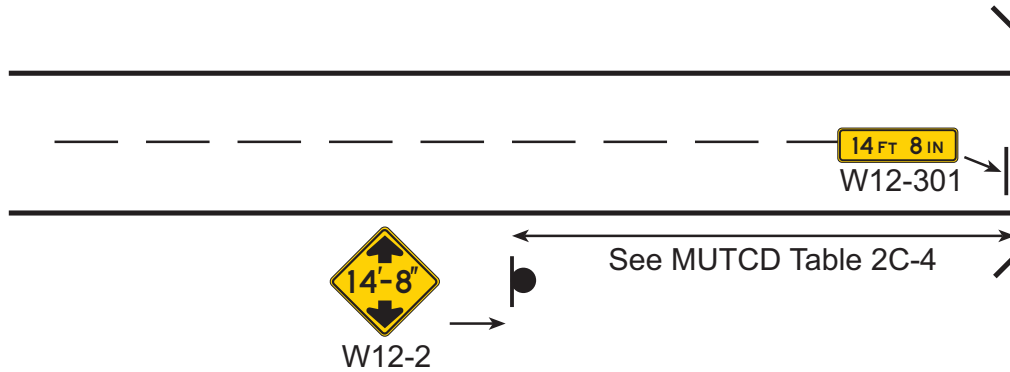
17-702



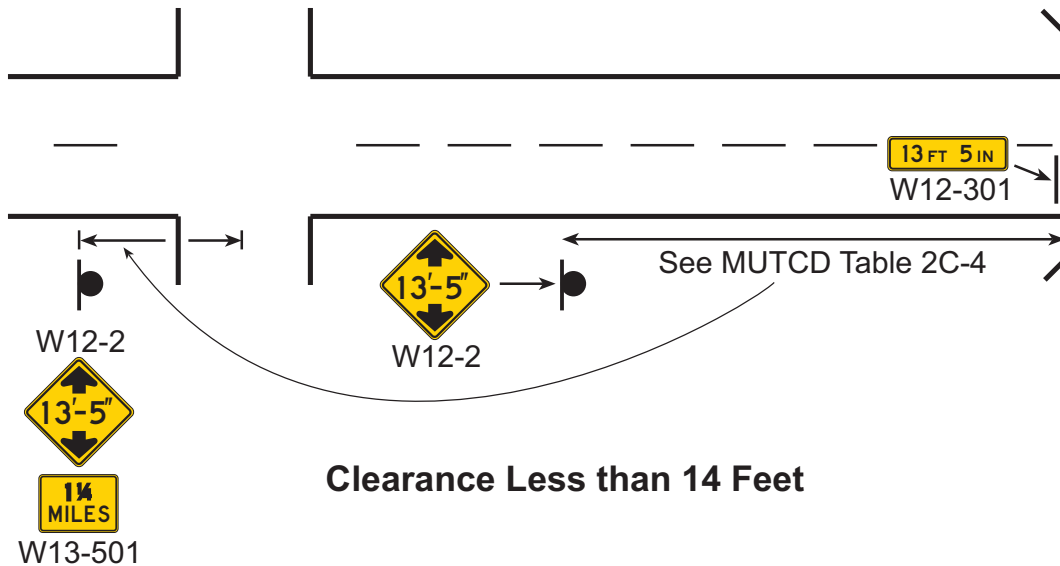
18-701

Note: Sign spacing and pavement markings shall be installed per the MUTCD

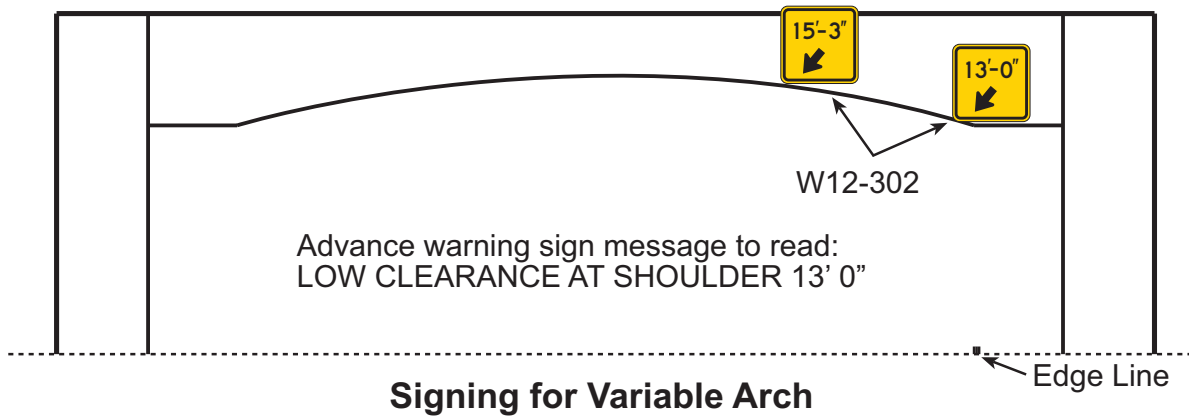




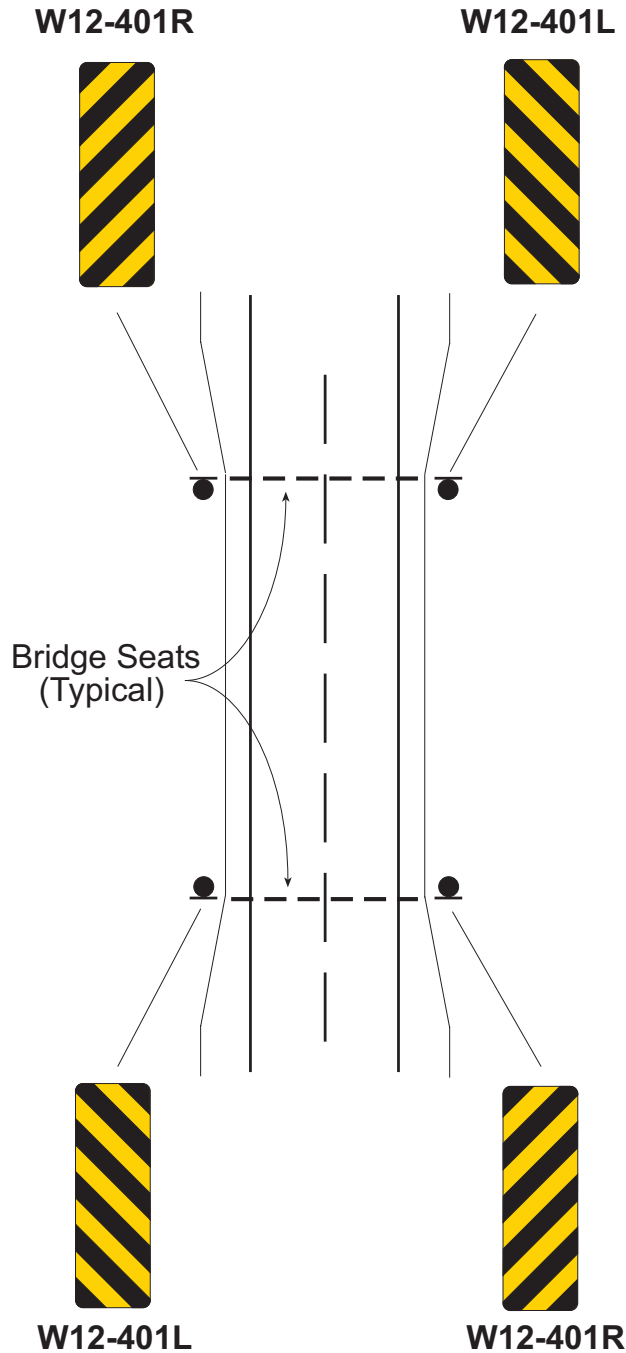
Clearance From 14 Feet to 15' 3"



Clearance Less than 14 Feet



Signing for Variable Arch



Notes:

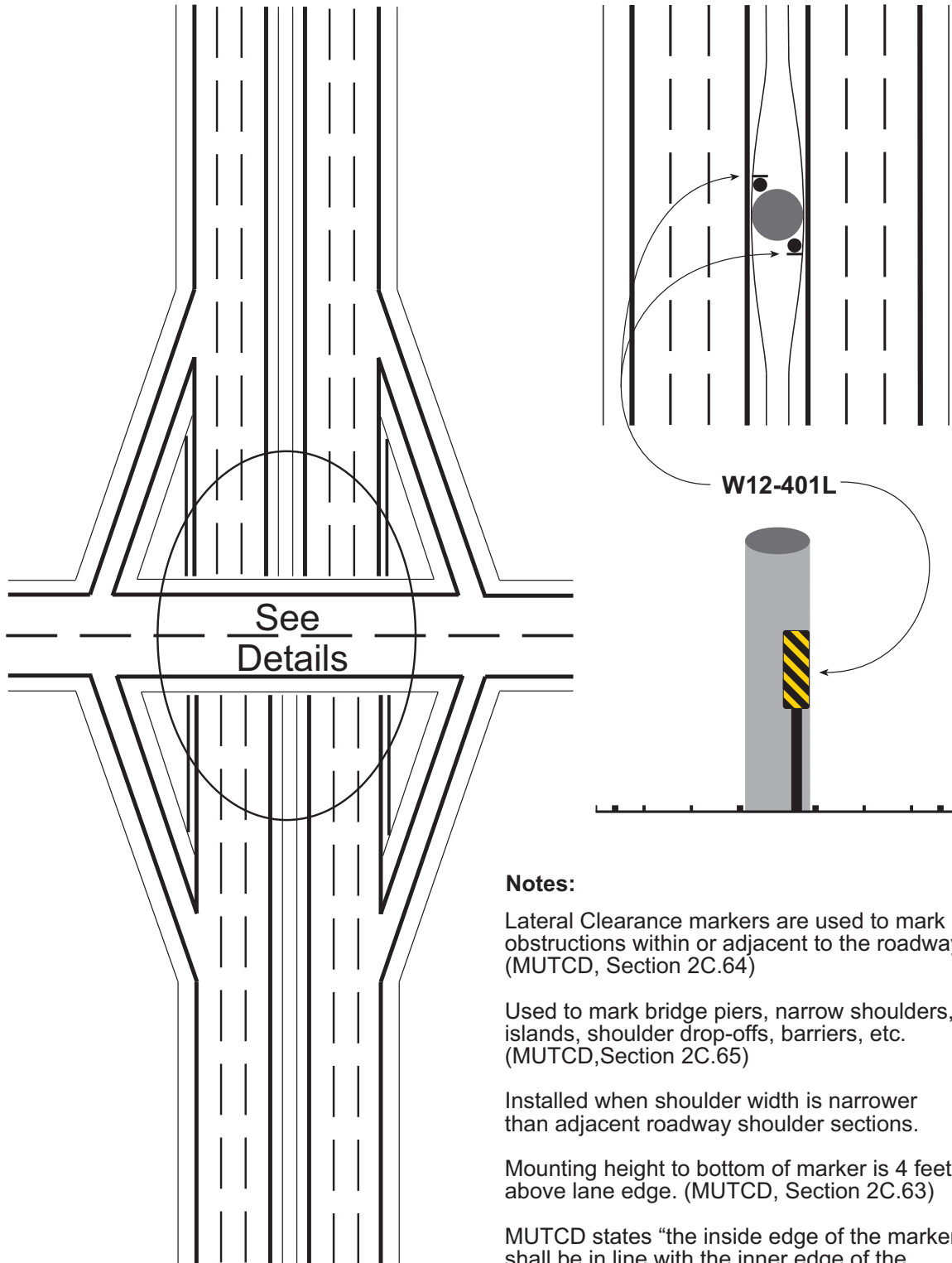
Lateral Clearance markers are used to mark obstructions within or adjacent to the roadway. (MUTCD, Section 2C.64)

Used to mark bridge piers, narrow shoulders, islands, shoulder drop-offs, barriers, etc. (MUTCD, Section 2C.65)

Installed when shoulder width is narrower than adjacent roadway shoulder sections.

Mounting height to bottom of marker is 4 feet above lane edge. (MUTCD, Section 2C.63)

MUTCD states “the inside edge of the marker shall be in line with the inner edge of the obstruction”. (MUTCD, Section 2C.65)



Notes:

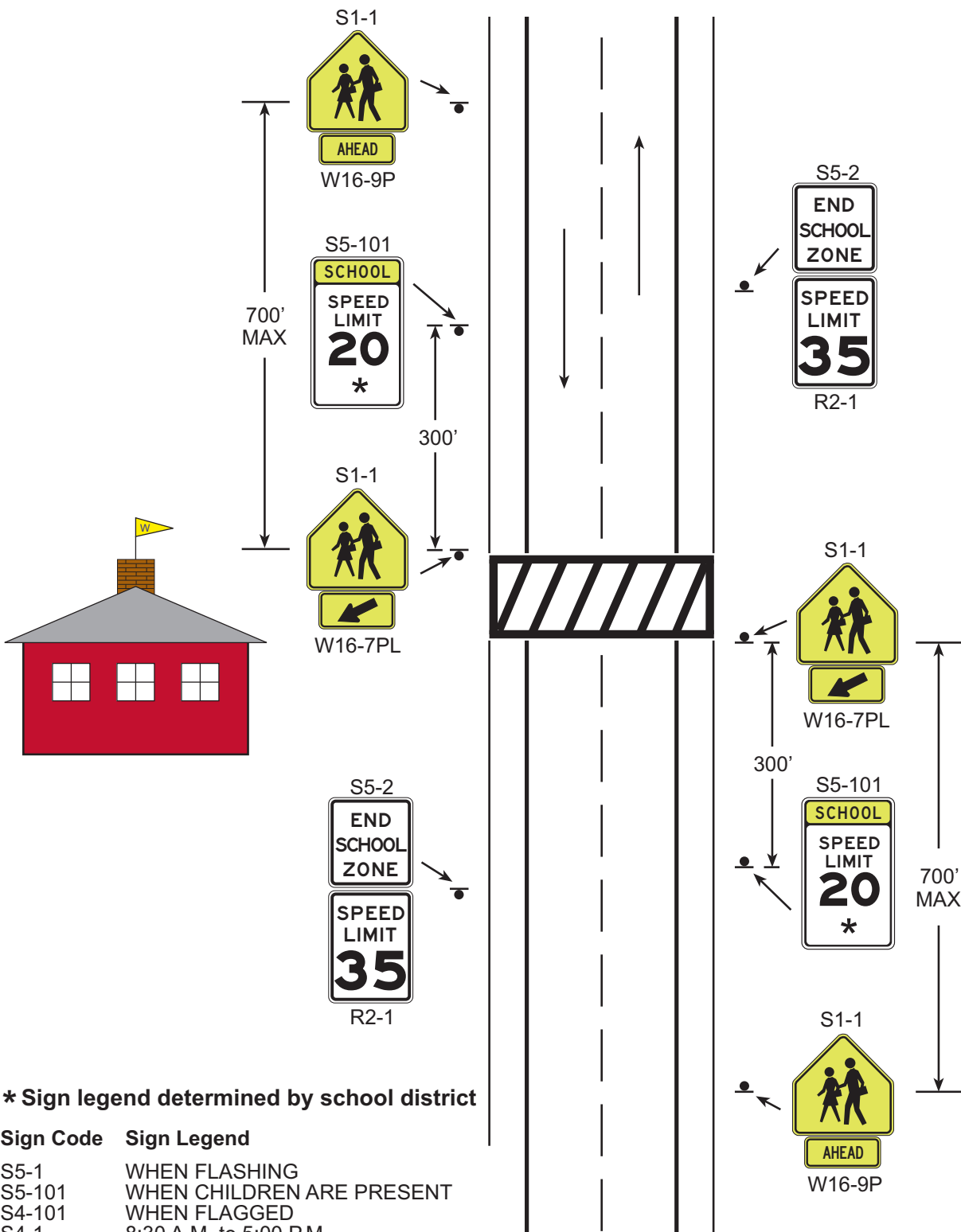
Lateral Clearance markers are used to mark obstructions within or adjacent to the roadway. (MUTCD, Section 2C.64)

Used to mark bridge piers, narrow shoulders, islands, shoulder drop-offs, barriers, etc. (MUTCD, Section 2C.65)

Installed when shoulder width is narrower than adjacent roadway shoulder sections.

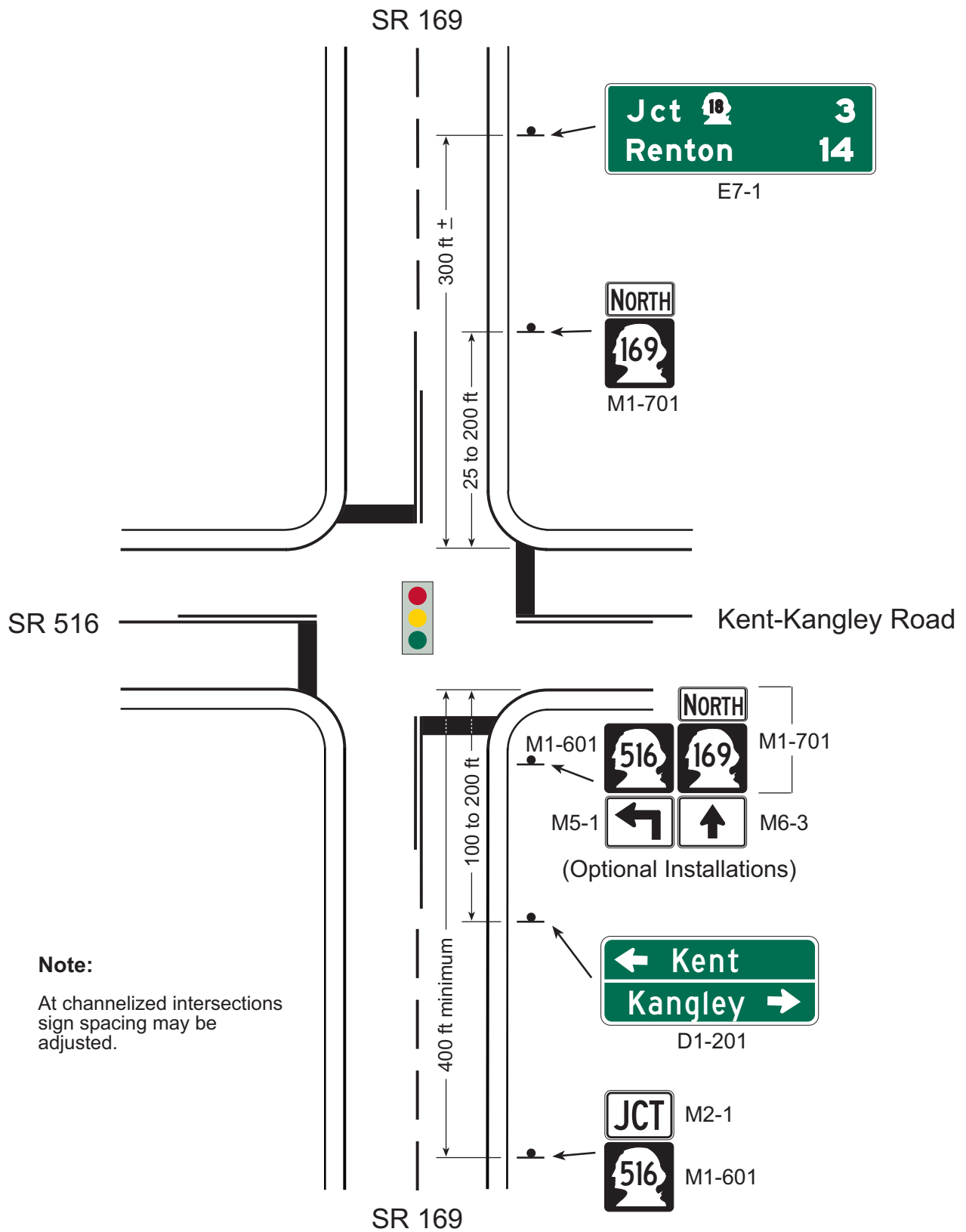
Mounting height to bottom of marker is 4 feet above lane edge. (MUTCD, Section 2C.63)

MUTCD states "the inside edge of the marker shall be in line with the inner edge of the obstruction". (MUTCD, Section 2C.65)

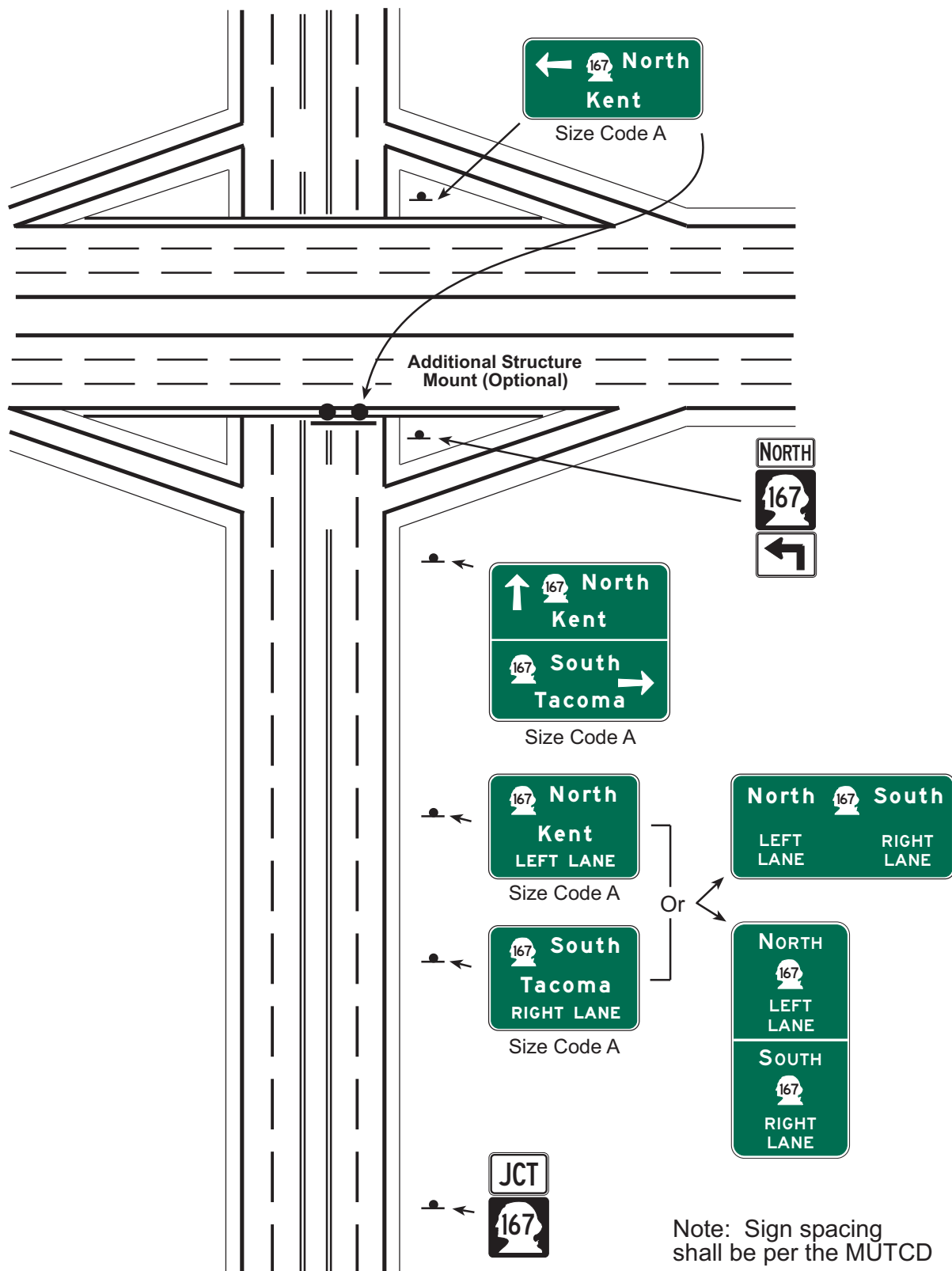


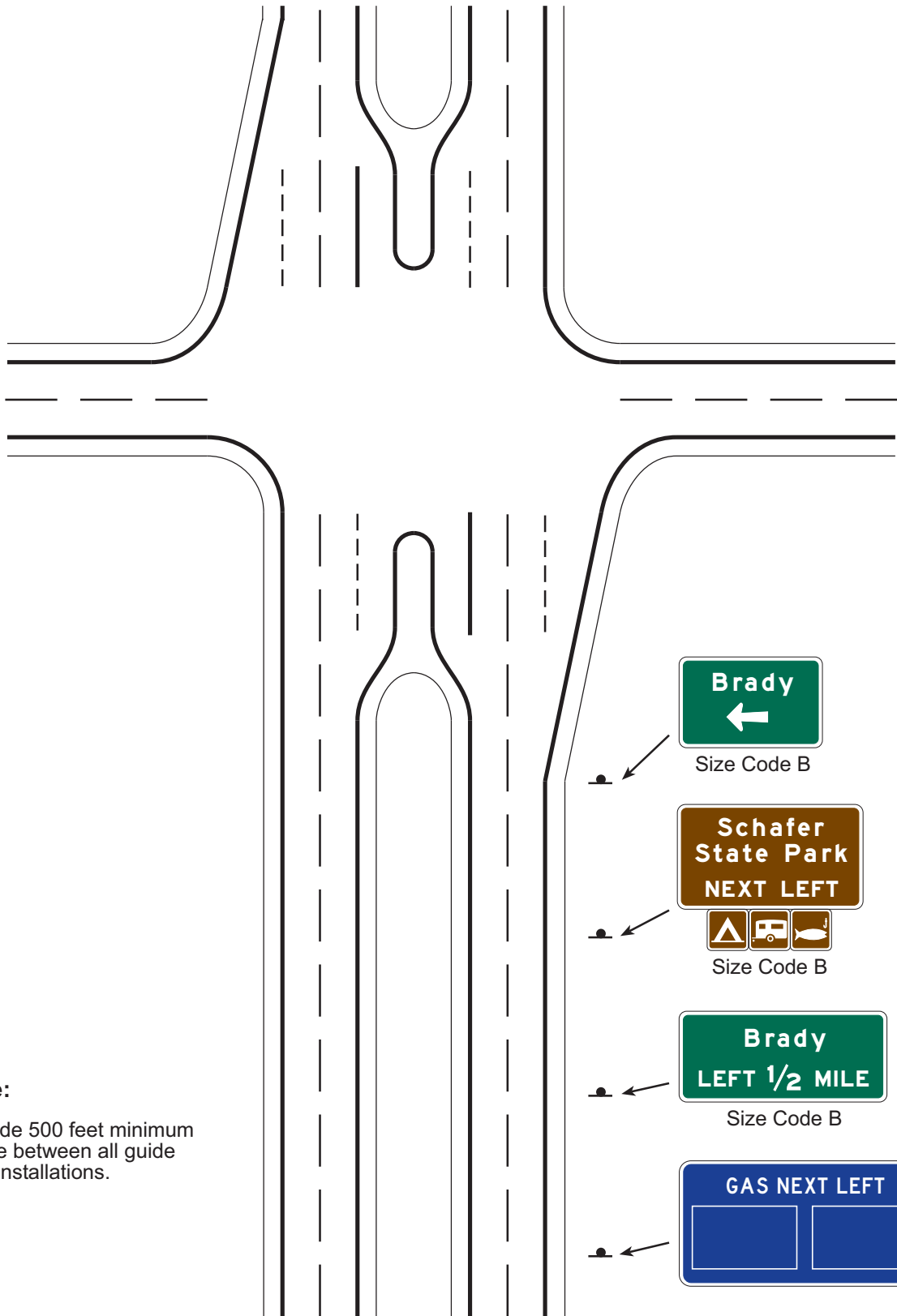
* Sign legend determined by school district

Sign Code	Sign Legend
S5-1	WHEN FLASHING
S5-101	WHEN CHILDREN ARE PRESENT
S4-101	WHEN FLAGGED
S4-1	8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
S4-5	SCHOOL DAYS X:XX A.M. to X:XX P.M.
S4-5A	SCHOOL DAYS X:XX A.M. to X:XX A.M.
	SCHOOL DAYS X:XX P.M. to X:XX P.M.



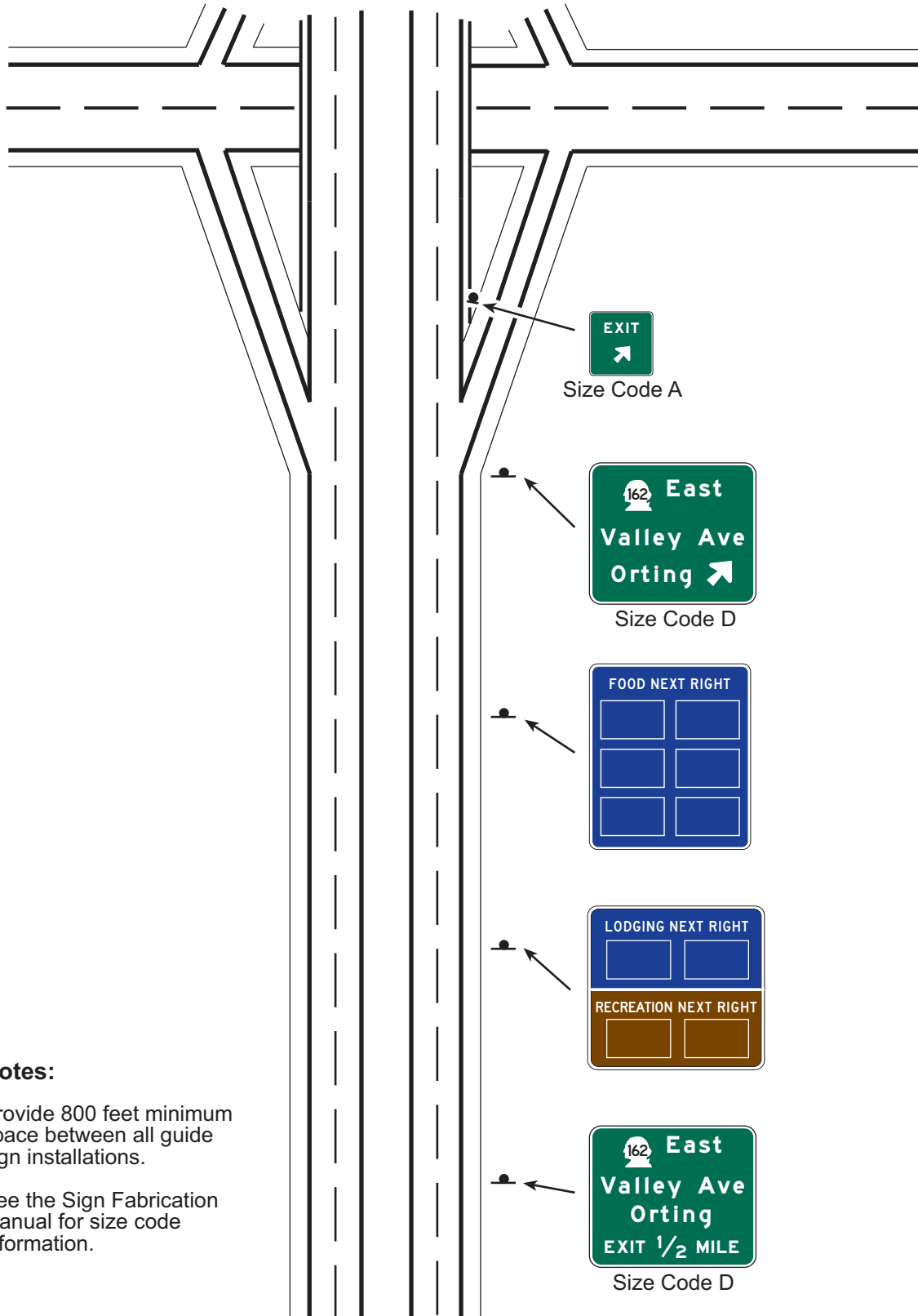
Note:
At channelized intersections sign spacing may be adjusted.





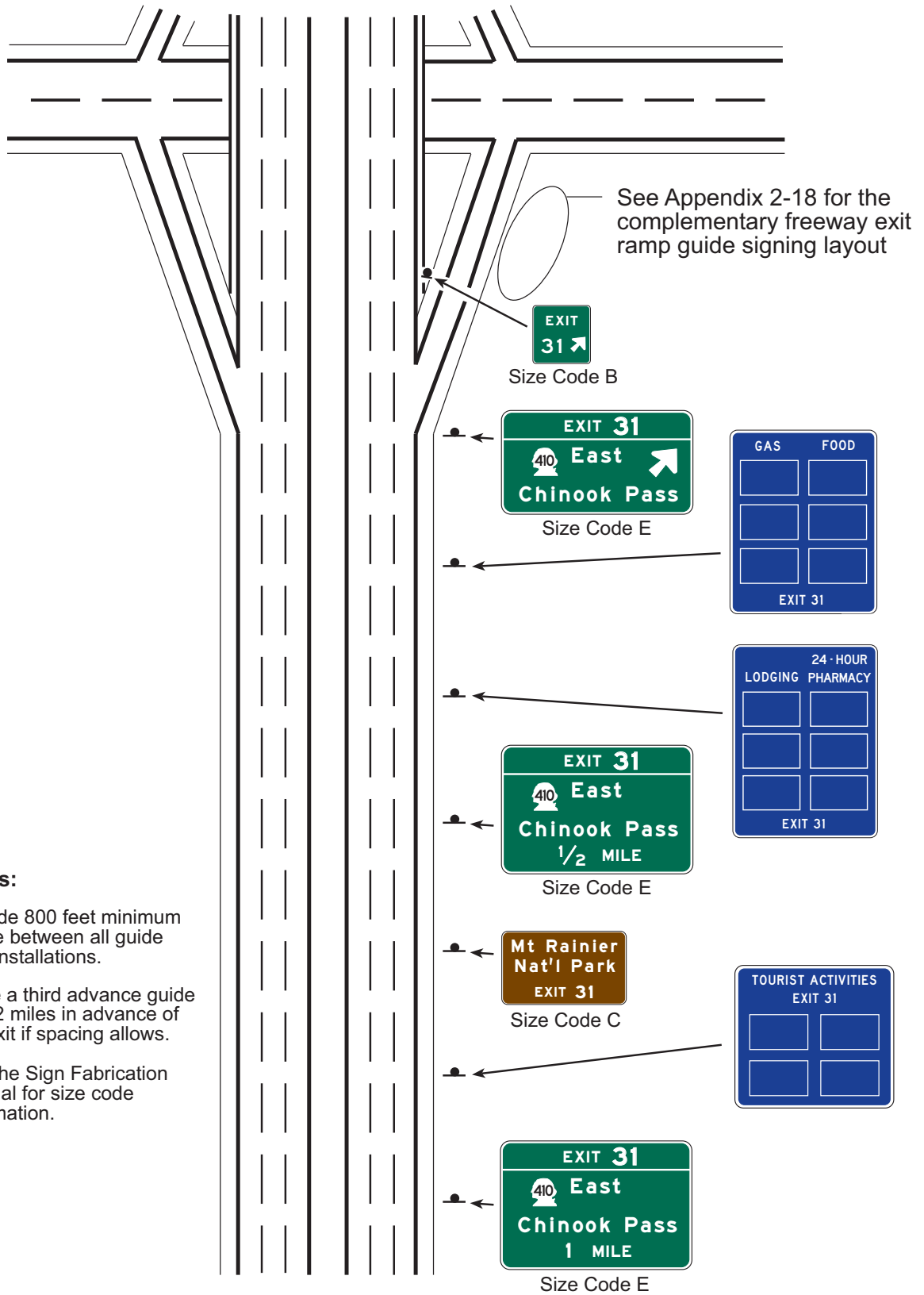
Note:

Provide 500 feet minimum space between all guide sign installations.



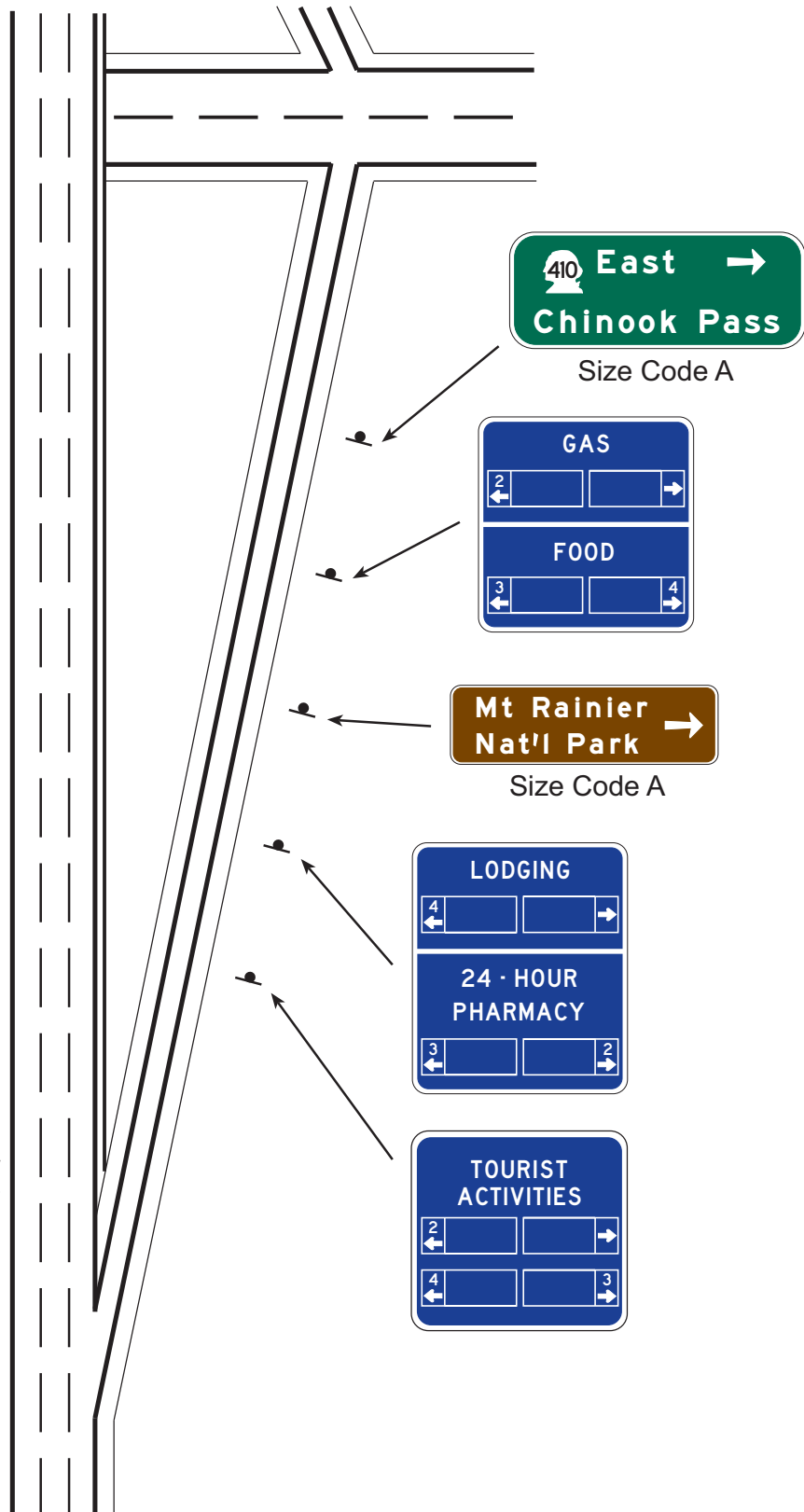
Notes:

- 1) Provide 800 feet minimum space between all guide sign installations.
- 2) See the Sign Fabrication Manual for size code information.



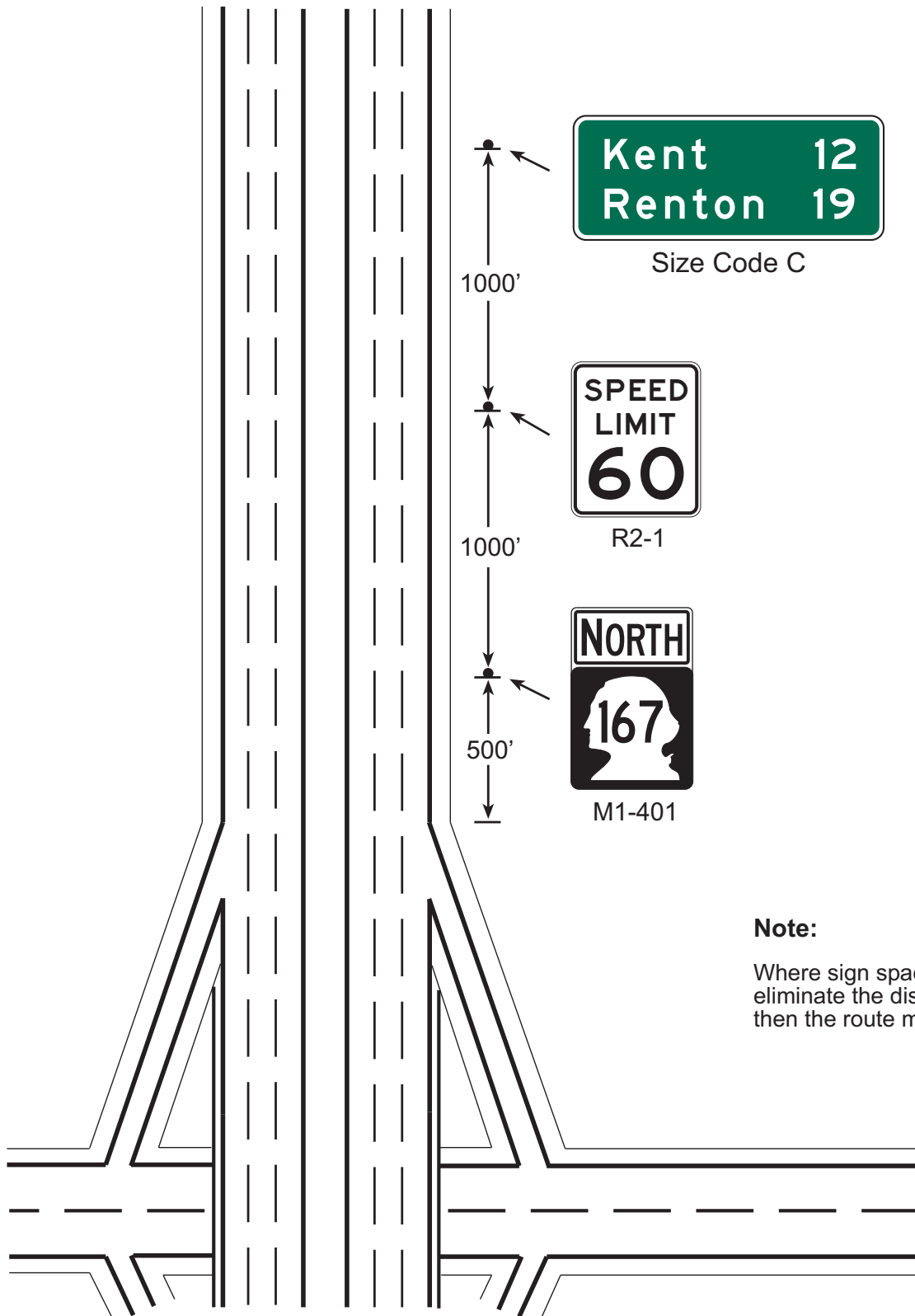
Notes:

- 1) Provide 800 feet minimum space between all guide sign installations.
- 2) Place a third advance guide sign 2 miles in advance of the exit if spacing allows.
- 3) See the Sign Fabrication Manual for size code information.



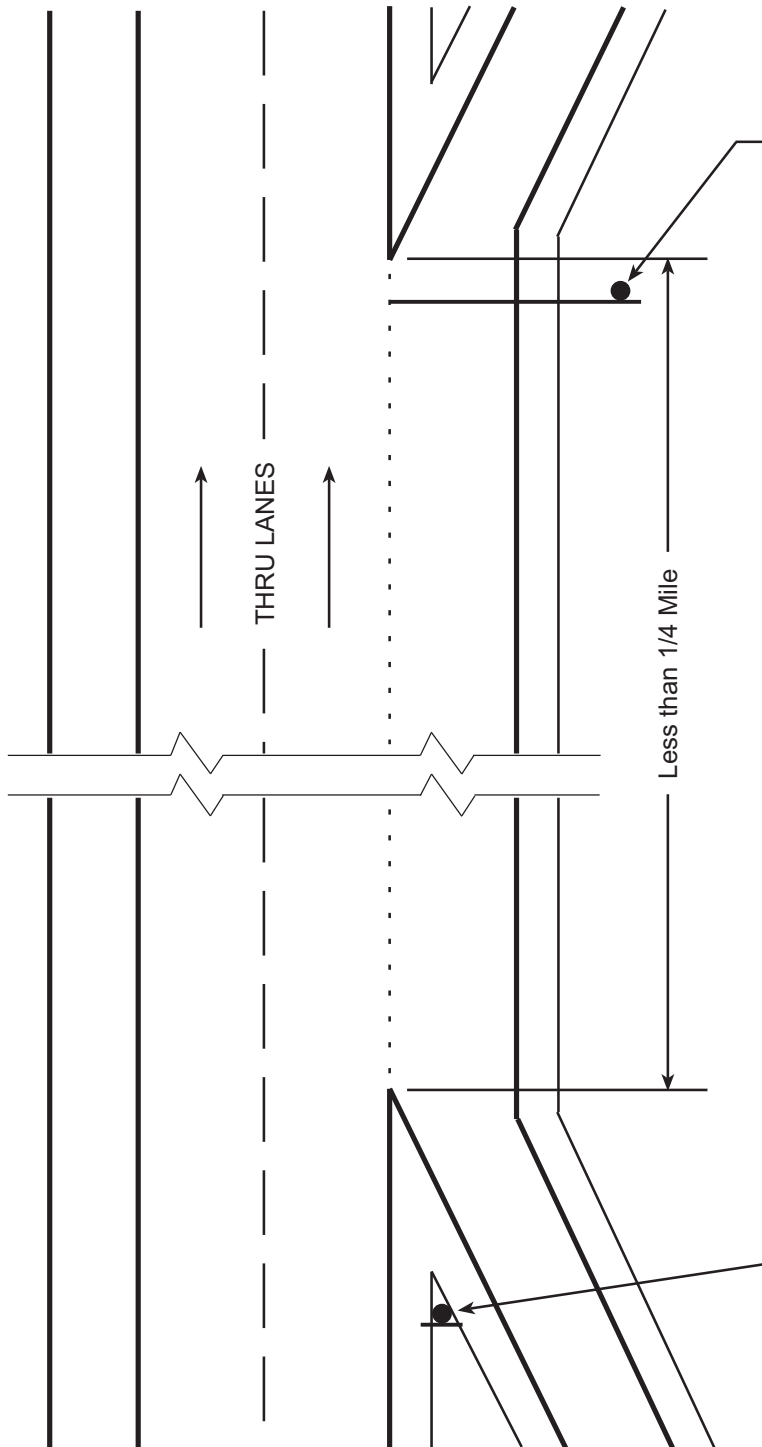
Notes:

- 1) Provide 100 feet minimum space between all guide sign installations.
- 2) See the MUTCD for regulatory signing and marking examples to deter wrong-way entry.
- 3) See the Sign Fabrication Manual for size code information.



Note:

Where sign space is limited, eliminate the distance sign first then the route marker.



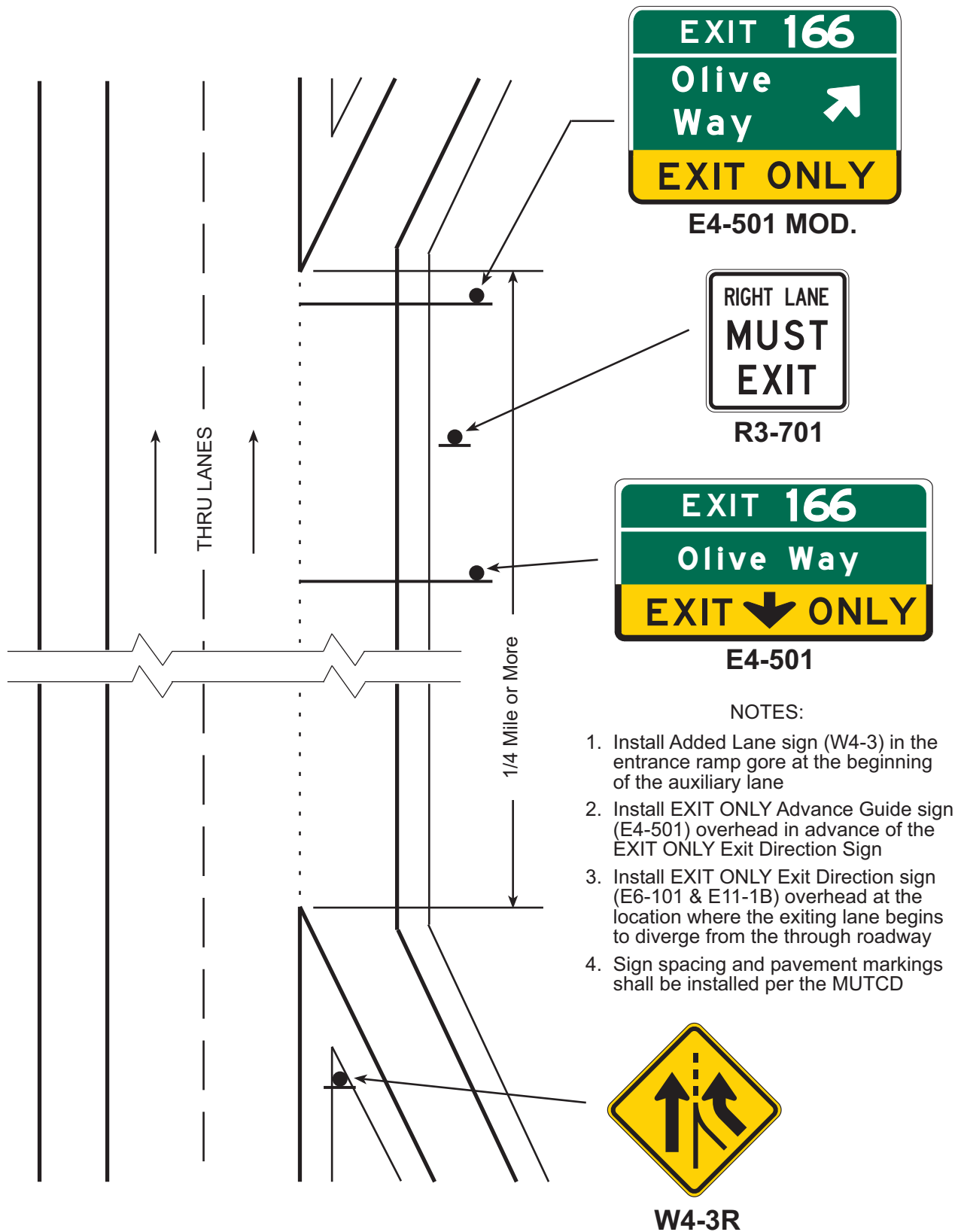
E6-101

NOTES:

1. Auxiliary lane located between cloverleaf loops or closely spaced interchanges
2. Install Merge sign (W4-1) in the entrance ramp gore at the beginning of the auxiliary lane
3. Install Exit Direction sign (E6-101) overhead at the location where the exiting lane begins to diverge from the through roadway
4. Sign spacing and pavement markings shall be installed per the MUTCD



W4-1R



**Criteria for Selecting Traffic Generators
as Destinations on Supplemental Guide Sign**

Type of Generator	Specific Criteria	Major Metro Area ¹	Urban Area ²	Rural Area
Airports (destination name only, not symbol)	Regularly scheduled commercial flights per day.	35	20	15
	Distance from Interchange (miles).	5	5	5
	Paved and lighted runway > 2,500 ft long ³ .	–	–	–
Colleges, Universities, and Branch Campuses	Must be accredited. Total enrollment, full- and part-time students.	4,500	2,500	1,000
	Distance from Interchange (miles).	5	5	5
Regional Shopping Centers	Three major department stores; 500,000 sq ft of leasable space; minimum 9,000 daily one way trips ⁴ .	–	–	–
	Distance from Interchange (miles).	1	1	1
Industrial Parks	500,000 sq ft of leasable space ⁵ .	–	–	–
	Distance from Interchange.	5	5	5
Ports/Port Districts	Served by two or more transportation modes (water, highway, rail, air).			
	Distance from Interchange.	5	5	5
Event Venues	Annual attendance.	300,000	250,000	200,000
	Distance from Interchange (miles).	2	2	2
Major Recreation Areas	Annual attendance (open to public).	300,000	250,000	100,000
National Parks	Sign from major junctions; case by case.			
State Parks ⁶	Distance from Interchange (miles).	15	15	15
USFS Facilities (Campgrounds, HQs)	Distance from Interchange (miles).	1	1	10

¹Population greater than 50,000.

²Population 5,000–49,999.

³See Section 2.15(1) for additional criteria.

⁴See WAC 468-95-140 for additional criteria.

⁵Leasable space can be a mix of manufacturing, service, and warehouse facilities.

⁶Per RCW 47.36.290.



a



b



c

Name of Organization _____

Organization Address

Mailing Address (if different)

Name of Authorizing Official (include title, i.e., Director, Trustee)

Address of Authorizing Official

Telephone Number

E-mail Address

Has your organization been granted nonprofit status (IRS 501(c)(3))? Y N

Please provide the following information about your organization:

- What are your visitation hours and when are you open to the general public (note any seasonal variations to schedule of operation)?

- Is the facility easily accessible to all visitors, including ADA features? Y N
- Is the facility readily visible from the highway? Y N
- If not, how far is your facility from the state highway on which the sign is being requested?

- Is the road serving your facility a two-lane, all-weather road? Y N
- Please indicate the name or number of the road, street, or highway serving your facility.

- Please describe where you would like the sign to be located. Be specific, include the state highway number and milepost or distance to the nearest important intersection or junction.

Please answer the following questions for a historic site:

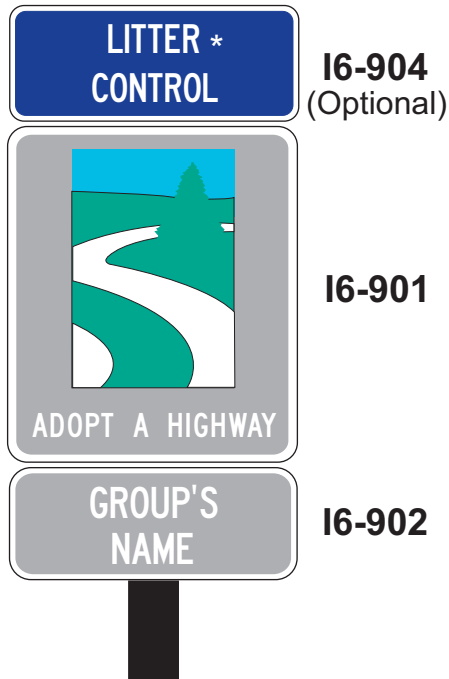
- Is your site included in the Washington Heritage Register? Y N
- Is there an interpretive center or guided tour? Y N
- Has your facility been approved by the Heritage Resource Center of the Washington State Historical Society? Y N

Sign approved Sign disapproved Reason for disapproval _____

Chair, Review Committee

Date

Two Lane Highway (All Speeds)
Multi-Lane Highway (50 mph or less)



Multi-Lane Highway
(55 mph or greater)

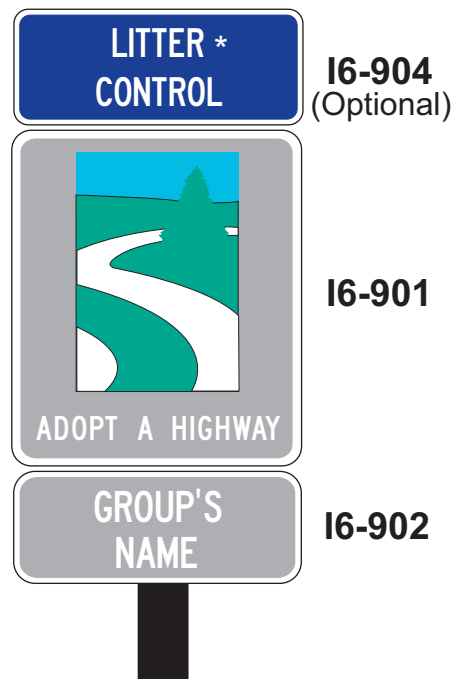


* - Message may be modified to read: WILDFLOWERS, TREE PLANTING or as specified.

Highway Median Sections



Ramp Sections



Multi-Lane Highway
(55 mph or greater)



16-906

