

HIGHWAY GUIDE AND INFORMATION SIGN MANUAL

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FOREWORD

Traffic Control Devices such as signs, signals and pavement markings provide instructions to the driver about changes in driving conditions. Of these, signs provide regulatory, warning and guidance information to the driver to allow decisions to be made on an ongoing basis.

Proper guidance through the use of guide and information signage is critical to the driving task. This task can be made safe, more efficient, convenient and comfortable by ensuring that directional route information is conveyed to motorists in clear concise, simple and understandable form. Not providing the required information in this manner can lead to driver confusion which may result in poor driving habits and increased frustration. Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation has always maintained jurisdiction over the guide and information signs on highways under its responsibility both in rural and urban areas.

The purpose of this manual is to provide guidelines and standards for the application of guide and information signs on rural and urban highways in Alberta. The manual has been prepared to provide consistency and uniformity in guide and information signage applications on rural highways throughout Alberta, as well as locations where a highway or roadway is serving a city, town or other major urban development.

National sign conventions are used throughout the manual, as outlined in the “Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada”. However, the Alberta Guide and Information Sign Manual includes additional guidelines and standards which are unique to Alberta’s highways. Business advertising and other miscellaneous signs are outside the scope of this manual.

Urban and rural municipalities are encouraged to use the manual to ensure a consistent approach to urban guide signage throughout Alberta.

Continuing comment is essential for regular updating of these guidelines and guide and information signage in general. Any feedback is welcomed and may be sent to Moh Lali, Director of Highway Operations, Technical Standards Branch, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation, 4999 – 98 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T6B 2X3.

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A4.1 INTRODUCTION

A4.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the highway system is to provide safe comfortable convenient transportation for people and goods. Traffic control devices and signs are an integral part of this system and provide the medium for the road authority to communicate vital information to the motorist along the highway.

This is accomplished through the use of regulatory and warning signs, including signs outlining speed limits and other regulations pertaining to the safe operation of the vehicle.

Of equal importance are the guide signs that direct motorists to their destinations and signs that provide information on the facilities adjacent to the highway system.

The purpose of this manual is to establish guidelines for the consistent and standard application of guide and information signs along the provincial highway system in Alberta.

A4.1.2 Jurisdiction

This manual shall be used for all roadways under management and control of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation. Other municipalities within Alberta are encouraged to use these guidelines to ensure consistency of signage throughout the province.

A4.1.3 Guide Format

The guidelines set out in this manual complement the information found within the Transportation Association of Canada's (TAC's) *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Canada* (MUTCDC). The *Alberta Highway Guide and Information Sign Manual* provides additional details that are specific to Alberta highways, and which may exceed the requirements found in the MUTCDC.

These guidelines replace the Guide Signing section within the 1986 *Highway Signing Manual*, and includes updates to, but does not replace the 1981 *Alberta Urban Guide and Information Sign Manual* which some jurisdictions continue to use. This guide also includes new sections on signing practices regarding ring roads and bypasses and a new tourist information sign program. The format of this guide is as follows:

- Section 1 introduces the manual including the purpose, jurisdiction and format of these guidelines.
- Section 2 outlines the purpose and importance of highway guide signs, and develops some basic signing principles related to human factors.
- Section 3 describes general conditions for design, placement and materials used for guide and information signs.
- Section 4 describes methods of identifying travel routes to help orientate travelers. These signs include route markers and street identification in urban and rural areas.
- Section 5 describes methods of displaying directional and confirmation guide signage to motorists so they may easily get to their destination.
- Section 6 discusses signs that are used to direct motorists and tourists to roadside facilities or other locations that may be of certain interest.

Regulatory, warning and construction signs are not included in this manual. Business signs, private signs, advertising signs and other miscellaneous information sign programs such as "Crime Watch", "Communities in Bloom", "Fire Prevention Awareness", etc. are also excluded from this manual. Information and policies on these types of signs may be found in other Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation publications.

A4.1.4 Definitions

This document uses the word *shall* to indicate requirements to be followed in order to conform to the document (*shall* equals *is required to*). The word *should* indicates that among several possibilities, one is recommended as particularly suitable without mentioning or excluding others; or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required; or that (in negative form) a certain course of action is disapproved of but not prohibited (*should* equals *is recommended that*). The word *may* is used to indicate a course of action permissible within the limits of the standard (*may* equals *is permitted*).