



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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TRAFFIC OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM NO. 2104

Jurisdiction and Maintenance of Signs and Pavement Marking in Cities and Counties
(This memorandum is intended to provide general operating guidance for TDOT staff.)

Signing inside of incorporated municipalities: Inside of incorporated municipalities, the municipality has sole jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all highway signs along all local roads and all regulatory and warning signs on conventional state routes per T.C.A. § 54-5-202. Route marker assemblies, destination signs, and distance signs will be maintained by TDOT per T.C.A. § 54-5-201 and TDOT Rule 1680-03-02, SUPPLEMENTAL RULES FOR GUIDE SIGNS ON FREEWAYS, EXPRESSWAYS AND CONVENTIONAL HIGHWAYS. This guidance does not apply to signing weight limits or clearances on state-maintained bridges, which are to be installed and maintained by TDOT. For additional guidance specific to railroad crossings, see below.

Along conventional state routes inside of incorporated municipalities, guide signs are a shared jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility. Criteria for the installation of guide signs by TDOT are set forth in TDOT Rule 1680-03-02, SUPPLEMENTAL RULES FOR GUIDE SIGNS ON FREEWAYS, EXPRESSWAYS AND CONVENTIONAL HIGHWAYS.

Railroad (RR) Crossing Signage inside of incorporated municipalities along conventional state routes: TDOT has no maintenance responsibility for signing RR Crossings inside of incorporated municipalities along conventional state routes. Per Federal Railroad Authority (FRA) regulation 49 CFR § 234.245, the railroad company is responsible for the signing on train activated warning devices immediately at railroad grade crossings. For questions related to a specific RR crossing, inquiries may be directed to TDOT's Freight & Logistics Division at TDOT.RailAdmin@tn.gov.

Pavement Marking inside of incorporated municipalities: Inside of incorporated municipalities the municipality has sole jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all pavement markings along local roads. TDOT has jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all pavement markings along conventional state routes and all fully controlled-access highways with state route or interstate designations. TDOT may enter into maintenance agreements with cities under which the city maintains all pavement markings and is reimbursed by TDOT for such work. Some specialty pavement markings, such as non-standard crosswalks or colored lane markings, may fall outside the general scope of what TDOT maintains. *(Please contact TDOT HQ Asset Management Division for information regarding city maintenance agreements or specialty pavement markings that may fall outside of TDOT's maintenance responsibility.)*

Community Wayfinding Signs: Community wayfinding guide signs are to be part of a coordinated and continuous system of signs that direct tourists and other road users to key civic, cultural, visitor, and recreational attractions and other destinations within a city or a local urbanized or downtown area. The use of community wayfinding guide signs shall be limited to conventional roads. If used, a community wayfinding guide sign system should be established on a local municipal level or for an urbanized area of adjoining municipalities that form an identifiable geographic entity that is conducive

to a cohesive and continuous system of signs. Community wayfinding guide signs should not be used on a regional or statewide basis where infrequent or sparse placement does not contribute to a continuous or coordinated system of signing that is readily identifiable as such to the road user.

Municipalities that opt to implement a Wayfinding system should follow the current edition of the MUTCD and may work with TDOT to review such systems. When a Wayfinding system is implemented, all guide signs, not including route marker assemblies, destination signs, and distance signs provided by TDOT, should be removed, and delivered to TDOT as directed by the Regional Traffic Engineer. Once a Wayfinding system has been established, TDOT will no longer provide guide signs within the limits of the Wayfinding system except for route marker assemblies, destination signs, and distance signs. Destination and distance signs provide information concerning cities, towns, and unincorporated communities located on the intersecting roadways.

Signing and Marking inside of counties: The county has sole jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all signing and pavement marking along local county roads. TDOT has sole jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all signing and pavement marking along all state routes in counties.

Intersecting Roadways with State Routes: For all local roads (city and county) intersecting a state highway, all regulatory, warning signs, street name signs and pavement markings shall be maintained by the local government. Per MUTCD: Section 1A.07. Responsibility for Traffic Control Devices Standard: The responsibility for the design, placement, operation, maintenance, and uniformity of traffic control devices shall rest with the public agency or the official having jurisdiction. Where the local road intersects with a state highway the local government's maintenance responsibility for the local road, including but not limited to traffic control devices, continues across the right-of-way of the intersecting state highway to the point where the local road abuts the roadway of the state highway or public road.

Railroad (RR) Crossing Signage inside of counties: At passive crossings on conventional state routes located in a county, TDOT typically has maintenance responsibility for all signing approaching and directly at the crossing including all signs (crossbucks, advanced warnings), markings, and other passive warning devices.

At active crossings on conventional state routes located in a county per FRA regulation 49 CFR § 234.245, the railroad company is responsible for the signing on train activated warning devices immediately at railroad grade crossings. TDOT is responsible for any highway signing approaching the crossing. For questions related to a specific RR crossing, inquiries may be directed to TDOT's Freight & Logistics Division at TDOT.RailAdmin@tn.gov.

LED and Flashing Beacons: LED and flashing beacon type warning signs along conventional state routes in counties are considered an option only when other standard warning signs have proven ineffective and there is an established crash history above the statewide average. By agreement, all hardwired signs and related utility costs are the responsibility of the county. TDOT will maintain all non-hardwired (solar and battery) type powered systems along conventional state routes in counties.

Signing on controlled-access facilities: On state-maintained fully controlled-access facilities TDOT has sole jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all signing on the mainline highway and related ramps. On partially controlled-access facilities (typically 4-lane divided expressways) where driveway access is the exception, not the norm, such that landowner legal rights of access have been acquired, TDOT has sole jurisdiction and maintenance responsibility for all signing, including setting speed limits. By contrast if driveway access is the norm and access control exist only in limited circumstances, the highway should not be characterized as a partially controlled-access facility.

Signs fabricated by TDOT that are to be maintained by TDOT shall have a standard TDOT fabrication decal applied.


Phillip Freeze (Oct 4, 2021 13:12 CDT)

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