

	WELCOME SIGN		<i>Issued: JULY 2004</i>
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			<i>Page 1 of 2</i>
RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	PART	HIGHWAY SIGNS	
	SECTION	MISCELLANEOUS SIGNS	
	SUB-SECTION	COMMUNITY INFORMATION	

General

Welcome signs are installed at the entrance to a municipality or community to assist in the promotion of the municipality or community. Welcome signs have a unique design and display a welcome message for travellers entering the community.

The sign structure is often accompanied by attractive landscaping which may include flowerbeds arranged to display a community message.

Standard

Welcome signs are custom designed signs consisting of one large panel containing a text message and a support structure.

The signs are allowed to display a simple message containing the following:

- “Welcome” message,
- the name and a symbol or logo of the urban or rural municipality, or the community.

The sign may also display information about the population of the community or municipality.

Advertising products and services or displaying other information about a municipality or community, such as website address or business phone numbers, will not be allowed on the Welcome sign.

Preferably, the sign should be constructed using light weight materials such as wood or aluminium sheeting.

Welcome sign structures placed within the clear zone, as defined in the department’s Highway Geometric Design Guide, must have a breakaway structure base, or motorists must be protected from striking the structure through the use of a protective barrier.

Use of heavy and rigid materials, such as concrete or steel, is not desirable. When impacted by a vehicle, rigid structures may cause serious damage to a vehicle and result in passenger injury.

No heavy or rigid structures will be allowed within the clear zone.

The sign and surrounding landscape should have a simple and aesthetically pleasing design to give motorists a lasting impression of the municipality or community ahead. Use of excessively large structures is usually discouraged, as it may be overwhelming to motorists.

When designing the landscaping for a Welcome sign, one should consider using small plants. Bushes, fences or other large decorative elements in the vicinity of a Welcome sign will not be allowed as they may pose a hazard to an errant vehicle.

Welcome signs are limited to a maximum size of 20 square metres, with a maximum height of 4 metres.

Eligibility

All existing rural and urban municipalities in Alberta are eligible for a Welcome sign.

A rural or urban municipality that wishes to obtain approval for the placement of a Welcome sign must submit an application to one of the Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation district offices.

A listing of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation district offices, general instructions, and an example of the sign application form are provided at the following link:

<http://www.transportation.alberta.ca/613.htm>

A typical sign application should include:

- the name and address of the rural or urban municipality
- sign details (including the size of the sign), the details of the message wording and symbols, the size and colour of lettering, and the sign background colour
- sign location details including the legal land description and distances to the highway right-of-way

After reviewing and accepting an application for a sign within the highway right-of-way, the department may issue a Letter of Approval.

A Letter of Approval is a document that binds the sign proponent and the department through mutual agreement for the use and placement of a sign.

Guidelines for Placement

Welcome signs may be installed within the highway right-of-way at the entrance to the municipality or community. One sign will be permitted on each highway entrance for the inbound direction to the community.

Welcome signs should be installed outside the clear zone, preferably within a backslope area at the fence line. Larger rigid structures, if allowed within the highway right-of-way, must be placed as far as possible from the edge of the road, near the right-of-way boundary.

Excessively large or rigid structures will not be allowed within the highway right-of-way.

Installation and Maintenance

The requirements for fabricating, installing and maintaining Welcome signs are outlined in the Recommended Practices guideline entitled General Provisions for Installing Private Signs within the Highway Right-of-Way.

The municipality or community is responsible for all costs associated with their Welcome sign, including:

- installation and maintenance of the sign
- future replacement of the sign and the sign structure
- any damages resulting from vandalism.

References to Standards

Highway Geometric Design Guide	Table C5.2a, Clear Zone Distances
Recommended Practices Section: General	General Provisions for Installing Private Signs within the Highway Right-of-Way