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Tourist Attraction Signage Task Force

Members are representatives from the following:

Governor's Office

House Tourism Committee

Senate Tourism Committee

Oklahoma Arts Council

Oklahoma Department of Transportation - Program Administration

Oklahoma Historical Society

Oklahoma Lakes and Countries

Oklahoma Museums Association

Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department

Oklahoma Travel Industry Association

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The State of Oklahoma administers the Tourist Oriented Directional Signing (TODS) Program which fulfills legislation passed in 1988.

The program is self supporting and aids the tourist and tourist attractions alike by providing positive guidance to eligible facilities through the use of signs along state rights-of-way.

Purpose:

- * The revenues generated by the tourism industry play a significant role in Oklahoma's economic growth. Tourism gives rise to considerable road travel and, consequently, a need for effective, consistent road signs to guide tourists and out of town visitors to their destinations.

Principles:

- * TODS shall conform to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.
- * The owner of an attraction approved for TODS assumes the cost of the signs, including installation, maintenance and replacement per Oklahoma Administrative Code (OAC) 730:35-13-4.
- * Available space for the signing location is necessary for any attraction recommended for approval by the Oklahoma Signage Task Force.
- * There is a safety factor in aiding tourists through the use of signs along state highway rights-of-way.
- * The location of other traffic control devices shall take precedence over the location of tourist-oriented directional signs.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

- a. Contact Traffic Engineering Division (405/521-2861) to request a TODS Manual and application. Completed applications shall be submitted to: Traffic Engineering Division, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, 200 N. E. 21st Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105-3204.
- b. Personnel assigned to the Traffic Engineering Division will review the application and a field review of the facility will be made by field division personnel to verify information provided and to collect additional data on existing conditions.
- c. The Department of Transportation shall then present the application with the field review information to the Oklahoma Tourism Signage Advisory Task Force. Meetings are scheduled every other month beginning in January of each year.
- d. The Oklahoma Tourism Signage Advisory Task Force will screen, review, and issue recommendations to the Department of Transportation regarding final approval or denial of the application.
- e. When the application is approved, the Department of Transportation shall:
 - (1) Forward the proposed sign design/s to the applicant for review and approval.
 - (2) Collect the cost of sign fabrication and installation from the applicant.
 - (3) Ensure that trailblazing signing, when required, is in place prior to TODS installation.

When the application is denied, the Department of Transportation shall:

- (1) Inform applicant of denial with explanation.

The procurement and installation of signs on local roadways (not on the highway system) will be the responsibility of the local officials and the owner of the attraction.

OKLAHOMA

TOURIST ORIENTED DIRECTIONAL SIGNING (TODS)

POLICY

Section 1. PURPOSE AND APPLICATION:

Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) provide directional information to tourists and out of town visitors for attractions and points of interest. Historic and cultural sites, religious sites, parks, lakes, or sites of natural scenic beauty, or sites suited for outdoor recreation qualify for this type of signing.

Section 2. OBJECTIVE:

- A. To improve existing signage with the primary goal of ensuring the safety of the tourist while directing them to their destinations.
- B. To provide consistent signing on rural, conventional highway rights-of-way for attractions of interest to the tourist.

Section 3. DEFINITIONS:

Attraction - Any traffic generator as identified in Section 4 of this policy.

Auxiliary Symbol Panel - Mounted below an approved tourist oriented directional sign with a maximum of five appropriate international symbols for multiple use recreational facilities.

Conventional Highway - Any public highway other than a freeway or expressway.

Expressway - A divided arterial highway with partial control of access and with interchanges at junctions with high volume highways.
For purposes of this policy, sections of expressways with at grade intersections may be considered as conventional highways. Sections of expressways with interchanges will be considered as freeways.

Freeway - A divided highway in which the only means of ingress and egress is by interchange.

Rural Area - An area of 25,000 inhabitants or less living in one or more contiguous towns

Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) - Official signing which is located within the right-of-way of conventional highways in rural areas, and which gives specific directional information regarding activities or sites of significant interest to the tourist.

Section 4. TYPES OF ELIGIBLE ATTRACTIONS:

Amusement Park - A commercially operated park which supplies refreshments and various forms and devices of entertainment.

Arena - A stadium, sports complex, auditorium, civic center, or race track(except horse racing), which has a seating capacity of at least 5,000.

Business District - An area within a city or town which has been officially designated as a business district by the local officials. In order to qualify for signs on a freeway, the municipality shall have two or more exits from the freeway.

Campground - An area reserved for at least twenty tents or recreational vehicles. A camping area will not qualify by itself, but shall have other recreational facilities or tourist attractions.

Craft or Antique Village - A group of businesses that deal in specialty items which are not normally found in national or regional chain stores. Examples of specialty items are locally crafted wood carving, glass work, Native American art, quilting, antiques, etc. In a community which has more than one business that qualifies for tourist attraction signing of this nature, signing for an individual business will not be allowed.

Cultural Center - A center for performing arts, exhibits, concerts, etc., and which has an occupancy capacity of at least 250 people.

Educational Center - A facility which is of outstanding educational value and which conducts tours on a regularly scheduled basis throughout the year.

Facility, Tour Location - A facility, such as a plant, factory, or institution which conducts daily public tours.

Fairground -A commercially or publicly operated tract of land with permanent buildings, such as exhibition halls, bandstands, etc., where fairs and exhibitions are held.

Forest or Wildlife Refuge - An area so designated and under federal, state, or local jurisdiction. International Symbol should be selected for sign.

Golf Course - A sports facility open to the public, with a minimum of nine (9) holes. It shall be open a minimum of six (6) days each week and offer rental equipment, including golf clubs and carts. Reservations shall not be required.

Historical Site - A structure or area recognized for its historic value. These sites and structures shall be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, sites designated with an official state marker, or a site recognized by a local community as a historic site.

Marina - A facility adjacent to a body of water, which is open to the public, and which provides fuel, supplies, launch and docking services for boaters.

Monuments and/or Memorials - A monument or other edifice erected on the site of a historical event or as a memorial to a person or persons of state or national prominence. Signing for memorials of local interest only will not be permitted. Memorials shall be attractive, well maintained, and have adequate off the right-of-way parking. On premise signs or brochures shall clearly indicate the significance of the site/edifice. Rest room and drinking fountain requirements are waived and are not mandatory to meet the eligibility criteria. Parking variances may be considered for these facilities.

Museum - An organized and permanent governmental or nonprofit institution, essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose, with knowledgeable staff which owns or utilizes tangible objects, cares for them and exhibits them to the public on a regular schedule.

Park - An area which is open to the general public for activities such as fishing, picnicking, hiking, swimming, boating, sports events, etc.

Resorts or Recreation Areas - A facility with recreational attractions normally present at a location which is the focal point of a vacation. In order to qualify as a resort, the facility should be situated to take advantage of natural, historic, or recreational attractions.

Scenic Site - A natural or man-made picturesque view of outstanding interest to the general public.

Stable - A horseback riding facility which offers horse or pony rides for lease. Guide service, regular hours, and tack shall be available.

Tribal Cultural Center - A facility which exhibits arts, crafts and/or historic materials associated with a particular Native American tribe or people.

Winery - A licensed facility which shall be open to the public for tours, tasting and sales providing an educational format for informing visitors about wine and wine processing.

Zoological/Botanical Park - A collection of unique living animals or plants.

Section 5. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Admission Charges - If general admission is charged, charges shall be clearly displayed in order to be apparent to prospective visitors at the place of entry.

Attendance - A facility shall be eligible only if it derives its major portion of income or visitors during the normal business season from users not residing within twenty five (25) miles of the facility, as indicated by appropriate documentation.

Distance to Facility - Facilities shall not be located in excess of five (5) miles from the nearest highway .

General - Attractions shall satisfy the requirements in Section 4, and be open to the general public regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, or disability. They shall be neat, clean, and pleasing in appearance, maintained in good repair, and comply with all Federal, State, and Local regulations for public accommodations concerning health, sanitation, and safety.

Hours of Operation - Attractions other than arenas and cultural centers shall maintain regular hours(eight hours a day minimum) and schedules and be open to the public at least five (5) days each week, and a minimum of eight (8) months during the year.

Illegal Signs - Tourist Oriented Directional Signs will not be authorized if the attraction displays any illegal advertising signs within any state highway right-of-way.

Minimum Attendance - Attendance at an attraction will be a determining factor for signing and will be considered in conjunction with other factors, such as intrinsic significance, with a minimum attendance of 1,500 annually in rural areas.

Campgrounds and resorts are exempt.

For facilities open less than twelve months, preference will be given to those facilities that have invested at least \$500,000 and anticipate at least the minimum number of visitors.

On-Premise Sign - The attraction shall have an on-premise sign identifying the name of the facility. If the attraction's on-premise sign is readily visible from the highway, TODS shall not be placed immediately in advance of the facility.

On-to Freeways - Tourist Oriented Directional Signs will not be authorized to direct traffic onto a freeway or expressway.

Parking Accommodations - Off-street parking (including ADA compliant disability parking) shall be available and shall be adequate to handle the demand for the facility. Fifteen parking stalls are required as a minimum for all facilities.

Sign Location - When used, tourist-oriented directional signs shall be used only on rural conventional roads and shall not be used on conventional roads in urban areas or at interchanges on freeways or expressways.

Restrooms - Restrooms shall be clean, sanitary, and available to the tourist. Restrooms shall meet the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).

Return in Same Direction of Travel - Tourist Oriented Directional Signs shall not be authorized for facilities if tourists cannot readily return to the highway in the same direction of travel.

Sufficient Space - If the site is located in a town, or other congested area, preference shall always be given to the installation of standard traffic signs (e.g., regulatory, warning, and guide signs). This may preclude the authorization of attraction signs if the minimum distance of requirement (200 ft.) cannot be met.

Water - Drinking water shall be available on site and ADA accessible.

Section 6. SIGN DESIGN AND PLACEMENT CRITERIA:

General - Tourist Oriented Directional Signs may be authorized for eligible attractions directing the tourist to the facility from the nearest highway.

Maximum Number of Signs - A maximum of six attractions shall be authorized for signs on any approach to an intersection.

Sign Assemblies - Tourist Oriented Directional Signs should normally be installed as independent sign assemblies, as follows:

- a. If the number of Tourist Oriented Directional Signs at an intersection approach is three or less, the signs shall be installed on one sign assembly with the signs with arrows pointing to the left above those pointing to the right. If any straight-ahead arrows are authorized, as in a situation where a road turns and the attraction's access is straight ahead, the sign for that attraction shall be installed above any signs for attractions to the left or right.
- b. If the number of Tourist Oriented Directional Signs at an intersection approach is more than three, the signs should be installed on two separate sign assemblies, with a maximum of three sign panels per assembly. The first and second sign assemblies should be limited to signs with arrows pointing to the left and to the right, respectively.
- c. If more than one attraction exists in a given direction, the signs for the closer attractions should be above the more distant attractions. Illustrations of the sign panel assemblies are shown in the typical sign designs.
- d. Auxiliary symbol panels shall be the same color as the Tourist Oriented Directional Signs and shall be mounted below the TODS on the same post system.

Trailblazing signing off the state highway system shall be installed and maintained, and shall conform to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices(MUTCD). Trailblazing signing that is not properly installed or maintained shall be justification for removal of the advance guide signs on the highway system. The requesting agent is responsible for the installation and maintenance of all trailblazing signs.

Before a tourist oriented directional sign for an attraction is installed, sufficient space shall exist to accommodate the placement of the sign, without interfering or conflicting with required highway signing.

Sign Design - Tourist Oriented Directional Signs shall be designed in accordance with the MUTCD as follows:

- a. Each sign should have one or two lines of legend, and a directional arrow. If the distance to the attraction is over one-half mile, the distance to the attraction to the nearest whole mile shall be included below the arrow.

The content of the legend shall be limited to the name of the attraction, the most appropriate international symbol, and the directional information. The maximum number of letters on a given line is normally sixteen. Sign shall not include promotional advertising, symbols or icons other than

international symbols.

- b. The standard sign shall be 72 inches wide by 18 inches high, but larger signs measuring 72 inches wide by 24 inches high may be authorized for three-line facility names. Letters, numbers, arrows, and symbols, shall conform to the provisions in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and detailed drawings in the Standard Highway Signs manual.
- c. Tourist Oriented Directional Signs should have white reflectorized legend and borders on a blue reflectorized background. However, a brown reflectorized background shall be used for attraction signs for national parks, Corps of Engineers recreational areas and historical sites.
- d. International symbols for facilities shall be selected by the Signage Task Force, although preference shall be given to the facility owner's choice. The symbol shall be incorporated on the sign. Multiple use facilities, such as recreation areas, may add an auxiliary panel below the TODS with up to five symbols on it for an additional fee.

Sign Location - Sign assemblies should be placed far enough in advance of the intersection to allow time for the necessary maneuver. A minimum of 200 feet should be maintained between all signs.

Section 7. SEASONAL EVENTS:

GENERAL

- a. Permanent facility (operated seasonally) such as a park that has Christmas light show.
- b. Shall meet the criteria outlined in Section 4 (Eligible Attractions) (Exceptions may be made for minimum attendance criteria.)
- c. Shall meet the eligibility requirements of Section 5.
- d. The costs outlined in Section 8 shall be applicable.
- e. Sign installation shall meet the requirements of the ODOT Clear Zone Policy (page no. 13). Coordination with the Division Traffic Engineer shall be established before installation and if Clear Zone can not be met, sign posts shall be breakaway posts.

CRITERIA

- a. Signing for a seasonal attraction or event may be displayed when warranted.

- b. The applicant shall be required to obtain a permit for work on a state right-of-way (See Agreement to Install Seasonal Signs on Highway Right-of-Way, page no. 12) each time there is an event for which signing is required.
- c. The applicant shall install at his/her own expense a portable changeable message sign directing motorists to the facility.
- d. For events of ten days or less, the applicant may install at his/her own expense a portable sign on a stand. The installation shall meet the requirements of ODOT's Clear Zone Policy (page no. 13).
- e. Such signing shall be removed by the applicant at the end of the season or event.

Section 8. * COSTS:

The applicant shall be responsible for paying the entire cost of fabrication, installation, and if necessary, replacement, including a one-time administrative fee which is included in the sign fabrication cost.

- a. Directional signs:

72" x 18"	Standard 2-Line TODS w/Posts	\$365
72" x 24"	Standard 3-line TODS w/Posts	\$400
72" x 12"	Auxiliary Symbol Panel	\$50

* The above costs are estimations and are subject to change.

Section 9. * MAINTENANCE:

The Department shall perform minor maintenance for Department-installed signs, such as straightening posts or signs in conjunction with normal sign maintenance programs.

- a. Any replacement due to deterioration, accident, or vandalism shall require payment as follows:

New Sign and Posts	72" x 18"	\$265 per sign
	72" x 24"	\$300 per sign
New Sign On Existing Posts	72" x 18"	\$130 per sign
	72" x 24"	\$150 per sign

* The above costs are estimations and are subject to change.

- b. Signs in a state of disrepair shall be removed by the Department with 45-day advance notification to the attraction owner. After 45 days, if no action is taken by the attraction owner, the signs shall be removed.

If the attraction owner desires to have signs reinstalled, it shall be necessary to complete the entire application process over again.

**APPLICATION FOR
TOURIST ORIENTED DIRECTIONAL SIGNING (TODS)**

Date: _____

NOTE: Please read TODS Manual prior to completing application.

Facility Information:

Facility Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

County: _____

Is facility currently open for business? Yes _____ No _____

If not currently open for business, what is anticipated opening date? _____

Annual Attendance (Refer to "Attendance" in Sec. 5): _____

Dates of Operation:

Months in Operation: From: _____ Thru: _____

Days of Week: _____

Hours: _____

Does Facility Meet the Requirements of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)?

Yes _____ No _____

Type of Facility (Please refer to list of eligible attractions in Sec. 4 of TODS Manual):

If not listed, please describe: _____

Is admission fee charged? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please describe: _____

Please describe, in writing, where each requested sign is to be located (indicate whether state or federal highway, including highway number):

Please Note the Following:

1. Enclose map or sketch showing the location of the attraction and the proposed sign location/s.
2. Enclose twelve (12) brochures with photos, if available, for Task Force use.
3. Submit application to:
Chief Traffic Engineer
Oklahoma Department of Transportation
Traffic Engineering Division, Room 2-A7
200 NE 21st Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73105-3204

Should you have questions about completing this form, please call Traffic Engineering Division at 405/521-2861. **Incomplete applications will be returned.**

I hereby certify that the information provided on this application is true and correct and that to the best of my knowledge (*name of facility*) conforms to all Federal, State and local regulations, including health, sanitary and water requirements. It is also my understanding that, if approved, the requesting facility agrees to pay for the cost of sign installation and, if required, replacement.

Signature: _____
Name: _____
Title/Position: _____
Mailing Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____
Zip Code: _____
Telephone No.: _____

To be completed by Notary Public:

State of Oklahoma
County of _____
Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 20____
Signature: _____

My Commission Expires: _____

ODOT USE ONLY

Date of field review: _____
Recommendation: Approved _____ Denied _____ Other _____
If *approved*, please attach sketch of recommended design including legend/arrow/mileage/symbol with suggested locations.
Comments: _____

Division Traffic Engineer/Manager

Date of Task Force review: _____
Status of Application: Approved _____ Denied _____ Tabled _____ Other _____
Comments: _____

TODS Program Manager
Part 2 of 2

AGREEMENT TO INSTALL SEASONAL SIGNS ON A HIGHWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY

County: _____
Highway No. _____

Oklahoma Department of Transportation

Permission is hereby requested to perform the following work on State Highway Right-of-Way:

Location of Work Area: _____

Work shall be performed according to the attached sketch (Include design sketch indicating work).

Applicant's Signature: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone No. (____) _____

It is further agreed:

- (1) All Tourist Oriented Directional Sign (TODS) installations placed on Oklahoma Department of Transportation Right-of-Way shall be subject to review and, if deemed necessary, removal by authorized representatives of the Department of Transportation.
- (2) That all work shall be performed in a neat and workmanlike manner, using materials acceptable to the Department of Transportation and that the right-of-way shall be cleaned up and left in a presentable condition upon completion of the work described herein.
- (3) The failure of the applicant to comply with any or all terms as set out above shall nullify the authority granted by this agreement.
- (4) That the Department of Transportation reserves the right to make such changes as may be required by further improvement or proper maintenance of the highway.
- * (5) All work to install Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS) and the installation and signs shall be performed in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. The Department of Transportation assumes no liability or responsibility for the action of the contractor in the installation of such signs and the applicant acts as an independent contractor under the terms of this permit.

APPROVED: _____
Field Division Engineer

DISAPPROVED: _____
Field Division Engineer

DATE: _____

DATE: _____

Distribution: Applicant

Field Division _____ Work Unit

POLICY

THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH AND PERPETUATE A FORGIVING ROADSIDE BY APPLICATION OF CLEAR ZONE CONCEPTS. ALL OPERATIONAL UNITS WILL APPLY THESE PRINCIPLES WHERE APPLICABLE, REASONABLE, AND WITHIN THE ECONOMIC CAPABILITY OF THE UNIT.

DEFINITION:

A “clear zone” is defined as the roadside border area, starting at the edge of the traveled way, available for safe use by errant vehicles. Nontraversable hazards or fixed objects should be removed, relocated, or shielded by a barrier system, if they are within the defined clear zone minimum width.

IMPLEMENTATION (SPECIFIC):

A. Clear Zone Consideration Levels.

Operational units will determine actions to take for clear zone implementation. Mitigation actions follow a specific level of consideration for each individual hazard, and/or group of hazards, within the clear zone. The words “hazard” and “obstacle,” used interchangeably, refer to the same individual, or group, of undesirable items.

HAZARD MITIGATION ACTIONS:

1. Remove the hazard completely - total removal.
2. Relocate the hazard.
 - a. Relocate to an area outside of the clear zone.
 - b. Relocate to render it inaccessible to errant vehicles; for example, into the protection envelope of a longitudinal barrier for another hazard.
3. Remodel the hazard to an improved safety standard.
 - a. Flatten slopes to maximum practical value.
 - b. Make planar surface interruptions more safely traversable.
 - c. Make planar surface slope changes over a longer, less abrupt transition.
 - d. Make above-ground impactables crash worthy.
4. Shield or attenuate.
 - a. Use longitudinal barrier to smoothly redirect an errant vehicle around or by the hazard.
 - b. Install crash cushion to attenuate vehicle damage and/or occupant injury to an acceptable level.
5. No Action - Based upon a proven method of analysis, comparing the installation life cycle costs (initial costs plus future maintenance and replacement costs) weighed against the benefits of an action to comply with clear zone requirements. This action (by virtue of no action) shall be documented and become a part of the project file or the site file for future reference. Supporting computations will also be a part of this documentation. One recommended cost-to-benefit selection procedure offered for use is in Chapter VII of Reference (2), below.

B. Reference List.

The following references are adopted for the purpose of defining various terms and/or delineating design procedures used for implementation. The most current editions will apply.

- (1) A POLICY ON GEOMETRIC DESIGN OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETS, 1984, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.
- (2) GUIDE FOR SELECTING, LOCATING, AND DESIGNING TRAFFIC BARRIERS, 1977, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.
- (3) A Supplement to A Guide for Selecting, Locating, and Designing Traffic Barriers, 1980. Texas Transportation Institute (A Training Manual) for U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.
- (4) CLEAR ZONE IMPLEMENTATION PACKAGE - OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 1987.
- (5) Safety Design and Operational Practices for Streets and Highways, Technology Sharing Report 80-228, U. S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration Office of Research and Development, Implementation Division, May, 1980.
- (6) Effectiveness of Clear Recovery Zones, NCHRP Report 247, Transportation Research Board, National Research Council, May, 1982.
- (7) Highway Design and Operational Practices Related to Highway Safety, 2nd Ed., 1974, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Washington, D. C.
- (8) A Guide for Erecting Mailboxes on Highways, May, 1984, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, Washington, D. C.
- (9) Highway Safety, Special Report 107, Highway Research Board, National Research Council, National Academy of Sciences/Engineering, August, 1969.
- (10) Selection of Safe Roadside Cross Sections, NCHRP Report 158, 1975.

- (11) Guide to Management of Roadside Trees, December, 1986, U. S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration RD&T Report No. FHWA-IP-86-17 (Implementation Package).

IMPLEMENTATION (ADVISORY):

Explanation: A vehicle may leave the traveled way due to a number of circumstances. Some operators will leave due to self choice and others in response to a real or perceived hazard within, or adjacent to, the traveled way. Still others will leave because of a loss of operational control due to their own physical condition, or due to substances on or above the traveled way (spilled solids or liquids, ice, water, fog, smoke, or vapors).

For whatever reason a driver/operator leaves the traveled way, statistics overwhelmingly prove that the great majority of operators can, and will, return to the traveled way directly, or will come to a safe, upright stop when presented with a reasonably flat and clear roadside. This clear zone adjacent to the travel lanes will be established and technically quantified in Reference (4) Clear Zone Implementation Package, and/or by direct reference on photocopy inclusion therein.