

A4.6 FACILITIES AND SERVICES SIGNS

A4.6.1 Introduction

Drivers unfamiliar with an area depend on facilities and services signs to direct them to amenities and attractions along the highway. Facilities and services signage should facilitate an efficient and effective tourist and service information system throughout the province, which meets the needs of the traveling public, the tourism industry and government by:

- Providing high quality, regulatory, directional and traveler related signing.
- Displaying visually appealing messages and installing safe structures.
- Promoting attributes and advantages of Alberta through supporting marketing material.

Facilities and services signing should:

- Provide protection of the landscape, promote safe structures and provide an effective way-finding system for travelers.
- Provide an overall hierarchy of traveler directions, through directing motorists to commercial centres and business areas, then individual attractions, destinations and traveler services.
- Emphasize that tourist signing is directional, not promotional (i.e. not for advertising purposes).
- Provide standardized and uniform, tourism-related directional signage within the highway right-of-way.
- Reduce roadside clutter and visual pollution created by uncontrolled and inappropriate signs.

- Provide consistent application and administration procedures across the province.

Symbols are often used on facilities and service signs or community signs, to quickly and easily display the available services for that attraction or community. For example, an attraction sign having a tent, picnic table, grocery cart, and wheelchair symbols would signify the facility has tent camping, day use picnic area, grocery store and is wheelchair accessible. Similarly, a police shield symbol and question mark symbol placed below the community name sign indicates that a police station and information centre is available in that community.

A listing of provincially recognized approved symbols for facilities and services signs are updated regularly on Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation's website at www.infra.gov.ab.ca.

Symbols are grouped in the following categories.

- Recreational Attractions
- Heritage and Historical Attractions
- Cultural Attractions
- Natural Attractions
- Alternative Tourist Accommodation
- Recreational Facilities and Services
- Motorist Services
- General Information
- Tourist Retail.

Service symbols are produced as white symbols on a blue background. Hospital and Airport symbols are exceptions, where they are nationally recognized as having a white symbol on green background. For more information on symbols refer to Section A4.3.7.

Several types of facilities that require signing exist along Alberta highways. These are:

- Emergency Services
- Transportation Services
- Tourist Facility TODS
- Highway Facility TODS
- Motorist Service Logo Signs.

A4.6.2 Emergency Services

A4.6.2.1 Introduction

Emergency services signs are the most important service facility sign. Drivers requiring emergency services are often distracted and agitated and require clear and concise directions to hospital, police or telephone facilities. These signs should be used in isolation from other signs and the direction they provide must be kept unambiguous.

Hospitals, because they provide medical emergency treatment are the most significant service which should be identified for the motorist. Hospital locations are usually known to residents of the area, however the precise location may not be known by an unfamiliar motorist. Directions to the hospital are provided from the community entrance and all turns along the travel route.

The Hospital Marker is illustrated in Figure 6.1 as specified in TAC's MUTCDC. Only hospitals that are prepared to accept emergency cases are to be signed.

Figure 6.1 – Hospital Marker



In small community towns and villages this marker is added to the Community Facility Sign at the community entrance or access (see Section A4.6.4.6). If a community facility sign does not exist, the symbol can be used stand-alone with directional arrow tabs placed below the symbol to show straight, left and right directions along the travel route.

In large towns having "All Services" and in cities, a larger Advance Warning Sign may be installed at the entrance to the community and/or off a freeway that leads to a hospital. The message on the Advance Hospital Sign may indicate to motorists which exit or intersecting road should be taken and the distance to reach the closest hospital providing emergency services. Examples of Advance Hospital Signs are illustrated in Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3. The words "HOSPITAL", "EXIT" and "FOLLOW" shall be in upper case letters.

Figure 6.2 – Advanced Hospital Sign



Figure 6.3 – Urban Freeway Advanced Hospital Sign



One directional sign is erected at each main highway entrance to the community. Additional directional signs are to be installed along the travel route within the community to provide wayfinding from the community entrance to the hospital. The desired route to each hospital is to be determined in consultation with the community officials.

A4.6.2.3 Police Signs

Two sign patterns exist for police in Alberta. The Municipal Police has a white message on a blue background as shown in Figure 6.4. The RCMP has a symbol of a helmet on a blue background as illustrated in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.4 – Police Sign



Figure 6.5 – Police Sign (RCMP)



The Police Sign may be placed on the highway to direct the motorist to the local police station. The Police Symbol may be placed on Community Facility Signs. Directional signs will also be placed on major roadways near the police station to direct motorists.

A4.6.2.4 Telephone Signs

With increased use of cellular phones, public telephones are becoming less used. However, specific locations exist where telephones are available specifically for emergency use. In urban areas, where access to public telephones is readily available, signing all facilities with a telephone would lead to unnecessary sign clutter. Therefore, these signs should be used sparingly in urban areas. In rural areas, telephones are usually available as part of a larger group of services such as rest stop areas and the telephone symbol will be incorporated into a larger sign.

This advance sign consists of a telephone symbol will be supplemented by an auxiliary tab indicating the distance to the access road.

The standard symbol indicating a telephone will be used as shown in Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6 – Telephone Sign



On rural roadways, signs will be erected only at telephone turnout sites to indicate the availability of telephones. On urban roadways telephone signs may be placed where a phone is available and in a location that does not cause sign clutter.

On rural roadways one sign will be erected one kilometre in advance of the access to the telephone for each direction of travel. An additional sign will be erected 200 m in advance of the telephone access for each direction of travel.

A4.6.3 Transportation Services

A4.6.3.1 Introduction

Transportation services signs are used to direct motorists to transportation facilities such as airports, ferries and parking.

A4.6.3.2 Airport Signs

Airports can generate a considerable amount of traffic including passengers and truck traffic servicing the airport facilities or delivering cargo. Most airports are located outside urban areas close to major provincial highway routes.

The locations of airport facilities are primarily of interest to persons visiting the city other than by automobile, although the identification of these locations is also of concern to the local-stranger motorist, who may have only a general knowledge of the location of the facility. It has been established that directional guidance to airports is essential. The directional requirements are determined in relation to the needs of the stranger who may be transporting persons to or picking up persons from the terminal and, as stated previously, customarily uses the highway route system.

The route to the airport and the classification of the airport are identified by the Airport Signs, which are 900 x 900 mm in size. The Airport Marker used for airports servicing jets shall be the sign specified in the MUTCDC and shall have a white airplane symbol on a green background, as illustrated in Figure 6.7. This is typically part of an assembly that includes the jet symbol, a name tab and a directional or distance tab. The name tab is usually placed above the jet symbol and indicates the airport name. The distance tab is mounted below the jet symbol. The symbol on the airport sign should always be oriented towards the route leading to the airport.

Figure 6.7 – Jet Service Airport



It is also necessary to provide route guidance to these transportation terminals along local roads starting from the nearest highway route.

The following modified directional sign in Figure 6.8 may also be used to help direct motorist on freeways to the right exit for an airport. Instead of an angled arrow, an aeroplane symbol is used to indicate the direction of the exit.

Figure 6.8 – Airport Sign



Consideration must be given to such factors as regularly scheduled passenger service, the frequency of trips and the number of outbound passengers departing from the various terminals, when determining the need for signage to these facilities. Any airport which provides regularly scheduled passenger flights will qualify for the installation of signs along any designated route to the airport.

Municipalities which currently have airports with jet passenger service include:

- Edmonton
- Calgary
- Lethbridge
- Medicine Hat
- Grande Prairie

- Lloydminster
- Ft McMurray
- Peace River
- High Level
- Rainbow Lake.

A different airplane symbol is used for smaller airports which can be either private or publicly owned. These airports typically offer various aviation activities to the general public including:

- Chartered flights
- Industrial or cargo flights
- Recreational flying
- Flying schools.

These types of airports are signed with the municipal airport sign shown in Figure 6.9.

These airport signs are typically included in assemblies similar to those for jet airport signs.

Figure 6.9 – Municipal Airport



Signs shall be installed to designate routes to the airport from the closest primary highway route and any primary highway route which is within five kilometres (airline distance) of the airport. The route should be via arterial roads to the facility and from the nearest east-west oriented and north-south oriented arterial roads.

Directional signs will be installed to mark the location of publicly licensed airports. One sign will be erected for each direction of travel 300

to 350 m in advance of the access road on the highway system.

A4.6.3.3 Parking Signs

Each municipal jurisdiction should establish minimum standards relating to parking fee structures, supervision, surfacing and illumination which should apply to any off-street parking facility whether municipality or privately owned. Any off-street parking facility which provides public parking and meets the minimum standards shall qualify for signs providing the off-street parking facility is not abutting on an arterial road or is not in the central business district of a large urban centre.

The Off-street Parking Marker Sign shall have a white "P" on a green background and be 750 x 750 mm, as shown in Figure 6.10.

Figure 6.10 – Parking Sign



In urban areas parking signs are provided for off road facilities only where parking is discouraged on the highway. The route to a nearby public off-street parking facility is identified by the Off-street Parking Marker Assembly.

The Off-street Parking Marker Assembly consisting of an Off-street Parking Marker and the appropriate arrow tabs shall be installed facing both directions of travel on the arterial road closest to the off-street parking facility. The assembly shall be placed at the

intersection of the road on which the facility abuts and the arterial road.

A4.6.3.4 Ferry

The Ferry Sign is to be used at any location where ferry service is provided. The symbol consists of a vehicle on a ferry in white on a green background. Supplemental tabs may be used to indicate the name, direction, distance and hours of operation. An example is illustrated in Figure 6.11.

Figure 6.11 – Ferry



A directional sign shall be placed in both directions of travel 300 m before the ferry or access road.

A4.6.3.5 Access for Persons with Disabilities

In 1992, Alberta Transportation and Utilities (now Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation), established the Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Transportation. Through the Advisory Committee, Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation facilitates work on initiatives brought forward by the stakeholders to promote barrier free transportation. The Advisory Committee's objective is "to have barrier free transportation systems within the province that meet needs for local and intra-provincial travel, as well as barrier free pedestrian environments within municipalities."

Eligible businesses that provide essential services and roadside facilities are encouraged to keep in mind the needs of motorists who may have physical disabilities, through:

- Meeting current building codes.
- Consider installing public access to a Teletype Telephone.
- Provide a wheelchair accessible facility including designated stalls in the parking area, easy access into the building and accessible washroom facilities.

It is also recommended that they maintain national uniformity in addressing accessibility needs and access. More information on accessibility is available on the Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation website.

The sign consists of a symbol of a person in a wheel chair on a blue background as illustrated in Figure 6.12. The sign is used in conjunction with facility signs to indicate that the facility meets access requirements for persons with disabilities.

Figure 6.12 – Access for Persons with Disabilities



This sign may be used with any off-road service signs.

A4.6.4 Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS)

A4.6.4.1 Introduction

Tourist attractions are considered a tourism business or facility if tourism is clearly the core business activity.

The tourism attraction must be listed in an official travel guide, entered into Travel Alberta's Tourist Information System, or is a legitimate operation recognized by the relevant industry association.

Many of the TODS have symbols included on the sign. Only symbols that have been approved by Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation are used on tourist and services signing.

TODS are subdivided into five categories. These categories include:

- Tourist Region Signs
- Tourist Destination Area Signs
- Visitor Information Centre Signs
- Tourist Attraction Signs
- Community Attraction & Facility Signs.

TODS signs are administered through a provincial sign program. Application, installation and removal of TODS signs shall be coordinated through the sign program administrator.

A4.6.4.2 Tourist Region Signs

Tourist Region Signs provide recognition of Alberta's key tourism marketing regions. There are Tourism Destination Regions (TDR's) which include: Alberta Central, Alberta North, Alberta South, Calgary, Edmonton, and the Canadian Rockies. In these TDR's there are Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO's) active in marketing

their region locally, nationally and internationally. Currently, there are 23 Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO's) in Alberta whose key role is to market tourism in their area. Examples of DMO's include: Kalyna Country, Mighty Peace Tourist Association and Chinook Country Tourist Association. An example of a tourist destination sign is provided in Figure 6.13.

Figure 6.13 – Tourist Region Sign



Signs will be permitted within the highway right-of-way on arterial highways at each entrance into the DMO area, welcoming travelers who are entering this new tourist area. Tourist area signs will also be permitted signifying other government recognized tourist areas in the province.

A4.6.4.3 Tourist Destination Area Signs

These signs are utilized to direct travelers to significant, tourism destination areas within the province. Signs are placed at determined locations to direct motorists. Significant Provincial Parks and Recreation Areas are considered to be in this category of TODS.

Examples of Tourist Destination Area Signs are provided in Figures 6.14 and 6.15.

Figure 6.14 – Tourist Destination Area Sign (Provincial Park)



Figure 6.15 – Tourism Destination Area Sign (Recreation Area)



These signs will vary in size dependent upon whether they are placed on a conventional or multi-lane highway.

Directional information is placed on the highway to direct motorists to significant parks and recreation areas in the province. Signs will be erected to mark the various recreational facilities operated by Alberta Environment.

The signs provided for each location will consist of an advance sign and a Directional Sign with appropriate symbols used on each sign. These signs will be installed for both

directions of travel along the appropriate highway. Directional Signs are installed 200 m from the access road turnoff.

A4.6.4.4 Visitor Information Centre Signs

Visitor Information Centres serve as important venues in promoting attractions, accommodations and services to visitors who are entering the province, tourist region or municipality. They are generally located at critical highway access points at provincial gateways, entering tourism regions and areas, and within municipalities that are formally recognized by Travel Alberta marketing literature. Visitor Information Centres provide a one-stop location for motorists to become educated on the various tourism attractions and services available in the area.

Directional signs provide direction to provincially and privately-owned Visitor Information Centres that provide motorists with information about the available attractions and services within their area or around the province. An example of a Visitor Information Centre Directional Sign is provided in Figure 6.16.

Figure 6.16 – Visitor Information Centre Directional Sign



Signing for Visitor Information Centres shall consist of an advance sign erected two kilometres in advance of the highway access. Additional symbols with the appropriate directional arrow tabs may be required to direct motorists through interchanges or along service roads.

A4.6.4.5 Tourist Attraction Sign

There are four categories of tourist attraction that may warrant signing:

- Destination Attractions
- Major Resorts
- Major Attractions
- Regular Attractions.

The eligibility criteria for each type of tourist attraction may be obtained through the TODS and Logo Sign program administered by the province

Destination Attractions

Destination attraction sites are “world renown” or “must see” attractions that are formally recognized by the province and/or Travel Alberta. Specific examples of destination attraction sites include:

- UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as Dinosaur Provincial Park and Head Smashed In Buffalo Jump
- West Edmonton Mall
- Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology

An example of these signs is provided in Figure 6.17.

Figure 6.17 – Destination Sign



Major Resorts

Destination resort areas are self-contained developments that provide visitor-oriented fixed roof accommodations and developed recreational/attraction facilities in a setting with high natural amenities. Examples of a destination resort include Three Sisters Resort and Silver Tip Resort in Canmore.

An example of a Major Resort Sign is provided in Figure 6.18.

Figure 6.18 – Major Resort Sign



Major Attractions

Major attractions are businesses and facilities that generate a minimum of 15,000 annual visitations with the majority of those visitations generated by visitors residing more than 80 km away.

Major Attraction Signs provide direction to businesses that provide an experience rather than a service for travelers. These attractions draw a significant number of visitors outside the immediate area.

An example of a Major Attraction Sign is provided in Figure 6.19.

Figure 6.19 – Major Attraction Sign



Regular Attractions

Regular Attraction Signs provide direction to businesses that provide an experience rather than a service for a limited number of travelers. Regular Attractions are businesses that have less than 15,000 annual visits, and/or attractions that serve mostly the local customer base.

An example of a Regular Attraction Sign is illustrated in Figure 6.20.

Figure 6.20 – Regular Attraction Sign



TODS Trailblazers

Four different categories of Tourist Attraction Signs (TODS) have been described in this section:

- Destination Attraction
- Major Resort

- Major Attractions
- Regular Attractions.

If a particular attraction is off the main highway and one or more different minor roads needs to be taken to reach the attraction, a Trailblazer is used to direct the motorist to it.

An example of a Trailblazer is provided in Figure 6.21.

Figure 6.21 – TODS Trailblazer



The location of all tourist attractions or services business should be a primary consideration at the time of initial business planning. Roadside signing should not be expected to compensate for a poorly located business.

Signs should be carefully positioned so that they:

- Do not obstruct a driver’s view of the road or intersections.
- Do not obstruct traffic or pedestrians.
- Do not form a confusing background to normal regulatory traffic signs and signals.
- Are not mounted with directional signs.

- Do not heavily impact on visual amenity, particularly in environmentally and visually sensitive locations.

In areas where the placement of a TODS causes an operational or safety problem either the sign will not be permitted, or the operational or safety problem must be resolved.

To prevent proliferation of signs, there is a limit to the number of tourist and services signs that are permitted in the highway right-of-ways.

The distances from the facility and the location of signs within the highway network, inside and outside urban areas, can be found within the TODS program guidelines.

For the purposes of placement, the TODS described in the previous sections may be classified as shown in Figure 6.22.

Figure 6.22 – Classification of TODS

	Used on Multi-Lane Highways	Used on Conventional Highways
<p>TYPE A TODS (Major Sign)</p>		
<p>TYPE B TODS (Regular Sign)</p>		
<p>TYPE C TODS (Trail Blazer)</p>		

A4.6.4.6 Community Attraction and Facility Signs

A community sign is designed to advise the motorist of the upcoming community or community access, and provides information of the available attractions and facilities within that community.

Facilities that are displayed are generally public or community oriented in nature.

A blue “ALL SERVICES” panel may be used in lieu of the six facility tabs, if the community has the following services available: Hospital, Police, Information, Gas, Food, Lodging and Camping.

Examples of community facilities signs are provided in Figures 6.23 and 6.24. A maximum of four attractions may be placed on a sign as shown in Figure 6.25.

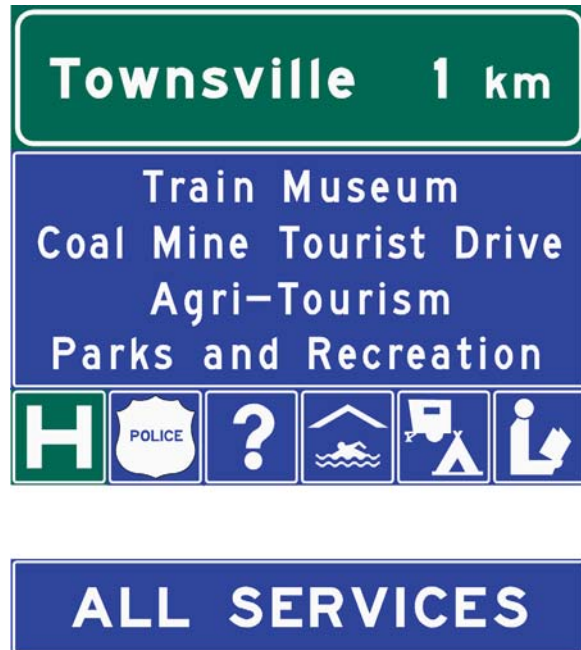
Figure 6.23 – Community Facilities Sign (for communities away from Highway)



Figure 6.24 – Community Facilities Sign (no attractions)



Figure 6.25 – Community Facilities Sign (with attractions)



The signs will be erected, one for each direction of travel one or two kilometres in advance of the corporate limits where the highway passes through the community and one or two kilometres in advance of the intersection with the access road where the community is not on the highway. In the case of communities which are not on the highway, a directional sign will be erected 200 m in advance of the access road. Where Logo Signs are placed on the highway, the Community Attractions and Facility Signs are placed immediately downstream to indicate the name of the community in which motorists can expect the gas, food and lodging services displayed on the Logo Signs.

A4.6.5 Safety Rest Area

Safety Rest Areas (SRA) come in different sizes and have different services and facilities available onsite. SRA Signs are applied to rest areas as outlined in the Alberta Highway Geometric Design Guide.

All SRA Signs have a white message, border and symbols on a blue background. Standard facility symbols are used to show the available amenities. An example of a SRA Sign is shown in Figure 6.26.

Figure 6.26 – Safety Rest Area Sign (Excludes Roadside Turnouts)



Safety Rest Areas are placed along the highway system to encourage safety by providing a safe place for weary travellers to stop and rest.

Safety Rest Areas are accessed via deceleration lanes off the highway and/or via an interchange. Signage is provided for only one direction of travel (right turn direction) in order to eliminate/discourage traffic from crossing and recrossing the highway (safety/operational concern). No-passing barrier lines, cable fencing or other means may be used to prevent motorists from crossing the median or driving on the wrong side of the centreline. The rest area implementation strategy will have rest areas staggered on both sides of the highway so crossing over is not needed.

Advance Guide Signs are posted two kilometres prior to the SRA and a directional sign is placed at the beginning of the taper of the deceleration lane to the SRA.

Symbols of dimension 600 x 600 mm are used on conventional two-lane highways. Symbols having dimension of 750 x 750 mm are used on high speed multi-lane highways.

Roadside Turnouts (SRA Types A, B, C and L) also offer travelers a place to stop and rest, but these areas have less opportunity for motorists to get out of their vehicles as they are too close to the highway. It is undesirable to have children and pets exiting vehicles near the highway.

The facilities provided on Roadside Turnouts are basic, which may include only litter bins or telephone access. As such they are signed as Roadside Turnouts rather than rest areas. An example of a Roadside Turnout Sign is shown in Figure 6.27. Their placement is the same as Rest Area Signs.

Over time, some of these Roadside Turnouts may be expanded into rest areas through provision of washrooms outside the widened pavement area. In these cases, the turnout sign could be upgraded to a rest area sign.

The amenities found on SRA and Roadside Turnouts are summarized in Table 6.1.

Figure 6.27 – Roadside Turnout Sign (SRA Types A, B, C and L)



Table 6.1 – Safety Rest Areas (Amenities)

Type	Facility	Basic Services				Optional Services
		Litter	Picnic Table	Phone	Washrooms	
Major Rest Area	Freeway/ Expressway and/or Multi-Lane Highway	X	X	X	Typically flush type	Major Building with Information may be provided
Municipal Rest Area	-	-	-	-	-	Services vary depending on Municipality Agreement
Minor Rest Area	Major / Minor Two-Lane Highways	X	X	-	Typically dry chemical type	Historical marker, tourist area map or information sign may be provided

* Note: Roadside turnouts that have been modified with washrooms off the widened pavement area can be signed using the Rest Area Sign. In this case, a smaller Rest Area Sign may be used (limited to three facility service symbols).

A4.6.6 Motorist Services - Logo Signs

Logo panels showing a business logo or company name are placed along the highway and in advance of communities, community accesses and commercial service roads. These signs show the availability of essential gas, food and lodging services near the highway or within the community.

Businesses are considered an essential service provider if their main commercial venture is the provision gas, food or lodging services to travelling tourists.

Examples of logo signs for gas, food and lodging are provided in six, four and two panel formats in Figures 6.28 to 6.36. An example of a combination panel and ramp signs are provided in Figures 6.37 and 6.38.

Figure 6.28 – Logo Sign – Gas (6 Panel)



Figure 6.29 – Logo Sign – Food (6 Panel)



Figure 6.30 – Logo Sign – Lodging (6 Panel)



Figure 6.31 – Logo Sign – Gas (4 Panel)



Figure 6.32 – Logo Sign – Food (4 Panel)



Figure 6.35 – Logo Sign – Food (2 Panel)



Figure 6.33 – Logo Sign – Lodging (4 Panel)



Figure 6.36 – Logo Sign – Lodging (2 Panel)



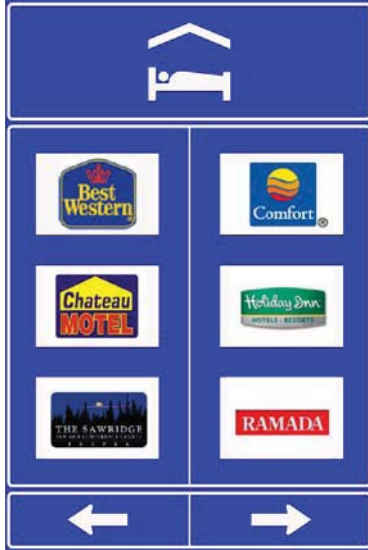
Figure 6.34 – Logo Sign – Gas (2 Panel)



Figure 6.37 – Combination Logo Sign



Figure 6.38 – Ramp Logo Sign



In areas where the placement of a Logo Sign causes an operational or safety problem, as determined by the District Operations Manager, the sign will not be permitted, or the request will be placed on hold until the operational or safety problem can be resolved.

Logo Signs are placed inside the highway right-of-way at the entrance to communities, in advance of community access roads, and at commercial service roads located adjacent to the highway.

Further details of the TODs and Logo Signs program are found at SignUpAlberta.com.

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