

A Study of Oregon Best Practices Agritourism Signage



2015

Created for
Clackamas County Tourism and
Cultural Affairs, Oregon

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Introduction

Signage is a tool that directs the traveling public from urban settings or freeways to rural destinations, including: agritourism farms, wineries, processing plants, country events and related businesses. Strategic, easy to read, attractive and well-located signs improve the chances of visitors reaching their destination and adds value to their experience. Signage also provides information that educates, inspires and protects.

This study provides comprehensive, current and practical information about agritourism signage on farms and other farm-related destinations as well as roadside signage that helps drive the traveling public to agritourism destinations. This study discusses how signage can enhance the visitor experience by providing education, developing a sense of place, protecting the property owner and fostering a safer visit. This study summarizes the purpose, types, locations and costs of some major types of agritourism signage.

In order to fully represent signage policy, production and implementation, we looked both within and beyond the borders of Clackamas County, Oregon. We pulled information from a broad knowledge base of experts at the local and state level.

We appreciate the participation of public and private road sign production professionals in Clackamas County; agritourism farm operators in Clackamas County from the Oregon Farm Loop—Canby Farm Loop, Farmlandia Farm Loop, Molalla Country Farm Loop; Oregon Travel Experience; agritourism farm operators in the Hood River Fruit Loop; Oregon Department of Transportation; Travel Oregon; Agri-Business Council of Oregon and Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs.

2015

Clackamas County Tourism & Cultural Affairs and MARStewart Group

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Signage on Agritourism Farms and Related Destinations

Where Signage is Located

Signage for agritourism farms and related destinations may be found on private property at the entrance, along the fence row or property line and in the interior of the property.

Entrance Signs

Entrance signs are direct marketing tools that quickly identify the business to the traveling public and provide additional information. These signs allow the traveler to recognize the location is an agritourism destination and gives them a brief glimpse into what the destination offers.



As illustrated in the entrance sign above, in addition to displaying the destination's name and brand identity, the sign or signage grouping at the entrance should indicate if the farm is open or closed (including *Closed for the Season*), and/or days and hours of operation. It is further desirable if the signage suggests the type of product for sale and/or the experience offered.

If the sign is located on a business' private property and no compensation is being exchanged for the message(s) or the right to place the sign, it is not an outdoor advertising sign and does not require a permit through the Oregon Department of Transportation, but the sign must still comply with all safety regulations and the prohibitions for the state.

County and municipal regulations may require additional compliance.

Outdoor Advertising

If signage promotes a location, activity or product not produced on that property, and/or if compensation is exchanged for ad copy or the right to place a sign at that location, it is considered outdoor advertising and requires a state sign permit from Oregon Department of Transportation.

Fees for Outdoor Advertising Sign Permits

Sign permitting costs vary. The application fee ranges from \$200 for signs 25 square feet or less and go up to \$1000 for signs over 400 square feet. Two sided signs count the total amount of square feet (for example, a 4'x4' double sided sign equals 32 square feet). There are also annual renewal fees ranging from \$120 to \$160.

Farm Loop and Trail Signage

Farm Loops or Trails are collections of agricultural destinations located in a small defined area. Each destination on the Loop or Trail is open to the public on a regular schedule or by appointment. The destinations, or “farmstops,” are organized into a tour route and plotted on a map.

The traveling public needs quality signage to help them identify and locate Farm loop or Trail destinations as they drive from the main highways and progress along the tour route on secondary roads.

When destinations are not easily identified, it is likely the traveler will either give up and turn around or go elsewhere, and feel disappointed. This can lead to loss of sales, negative feedback on social media or complaints coming to the farm stops and the Farm Loop or Trail offices.

Entrance signs are needed to help the traveling public:

- Know when they have arrived at the correct farm stop.
- Know when the farm stop is open or closed.
- Find a website to access for more information.
- Become more familiar with the product brand identity and scope.

While the traveling public is becoming more tech savvy and can find some locations with a mobile device, everyone wants to have affirmation that they are at the farmstop. In addition, half of the population still depends on printed maps and signage.

Types of Farm Loop Destination Entrance Signs

Signs showing Farm Loop or Trail identity let the visitor know “you have arrived at your destination.” These signs should be of attractive design, uniform appearance, and be present at each farm stop.

Approximate Costs (2015)

Concept A. Dibond Sign Suspended from “Real Estate-Style” post

One idea for entrance signs includes a durable and well-designed sign that can be hung on a “real estate-style” post, or attached by a bracket to an existing entrance sign with the farm name.

Sign: A popular material used for signs of this nature is Dibond™, which is durable, produces high-quality graphics, can be printed in a standard sign print shop and has a lifespan of at least five years. The cost of these signs is approximately \$12/sq ft. for a three-color sign.

Post: A “real estate-style” post may be installed on private land at the fencerow or property line, and then the sign can “hang over” the public easement. The Dibond™ sign can be suspended from the real estate-style post. The cost of the sign and post varies with height and material.

Materials: (sign mounted on real-estate style post)

Dibond™ sign 24” square with grommets = \$12/sf
4” x 4” x 6’ “real estate style” post, treated wood = \$30 and up for taller posts. 4’ tall at Home Depot.

Option: A smaller sign may be produced to mount to existing farm entrance sign with a bracket. This smaller sign may be Dibond™ Sign 18” x 22” with grommets = \$12/sf

Brackets, simple to fancy: \$5 – 30 each (optional)

Installation: Plan on installation of one sign taking one hour. The cost for installation appears to vary widely. Some sign shops may do the installation at no additional charge. An FFA student group may do the installation for a donation. It is important to have the installation supervised by the sign program manager.

Concept B. Dibond Sign secured to single post.

Sign costs same as in Example A.

Post: 4" x 4" x 12' treated wood = \$12 from lumber yard.

Farm Loop and Trail Signage Scenarios

A. Oregon Farm Loop (routes in Clackamas County)

Purpose

The Oregon Farm Loop is an organized and supportive community of 62 agritourism farm and related entities that welcome visitors. Three self-directed, scenic driving routes (loops) are located in Clackamas County. Each Farm Loop includes 20 or more points of interest called farmstops. The traveling public will find a fascinating variety of local family farms, farmstands, wineries, specialty nurseries, flour mills and livestock feed processors, country events and retail rural businesses.

Each Farm Loop has a website which describes the farmstops and plots them on a map. Printed loop maps are available at the farmstops, Clackamas County Visitor Centers, libraries and farmloop@gmail.com.

Location

Three Farm Loops are located in Clackamas County, known as Oregon Mt. Hood Territory. Clackamas County is located just south of the state's largest population center of Portland. It's rich farmland is home to the most farms per county in the state.

The three Farm Loops include:

1. Canby Area Farm Loop
www.canbyfarmloop.com
2. Farmlandia Farm Loop
www.farmlandiafarmloop.com
3. Molalla Country Farm Loop
www.molallafarmloop.com

Farm Loop Signage Program 2009 - 2015

A signage program that identifies farmstops on the Farm Loops has been in place since 2009. To date, these signs have been temporary signs and are placed out and taken in each year which is very labor intensive and volunteer dependent.

A permanent sign program for Farm Loop routes is needed. The signage program currently includes temporary corrugated plastic roadside route signs and entrance signs. The roadside route signs are approximately 24" square; the entrance signs range from 24" to 32" wide. Each Farm Loop has signs designed consistent with their loop brand.



A temporary farm loop sign. Signs are either attached to fences, to farm entrance signs, or installed on posts. Signs are either single or double sided.

Advantages of the Farm Loop Temporary Signs:

- Quick turnaround time to produce.
- Can include the Farm Loop's branding.
- Allow experimentation with brand and sign location at a low cost.

Disadvantages of Farm Loop Temporary Signs:

- Signs are easily-removed by people, hit and damaged by vehicles or farm equipment or vandalized.
- People steal the signs and reuse them to direct people to their garage sale or other event.
- Sign material has a life span of only one to two years, then needs to be replaced.
- Sign production and installation is very time-, mileage- and labor- intensive. It is difficult to find volunteers who will do a suitable job maintaining the sign program.
- Farmstop providers do not always cooperate by placing their entrance signs out each season.
- Farmstop providers are not all willing to be responsible for monitoring roadside route signs near their farm.
- Funding for new sign production and installation needs to be collected each year.

B. Oregon Country Trails (S. Willamette Valley)

Purpose

The Oregon Country Trails is a grassroots organization of rugged, rural ranchers, farmers, and recreation specialists who have opened their back porches, meadows, and crafts to the public. Organized as a system of "trails," visitors can choose the area of Oregon they'd like to explore, download a map with friendly stops along the way, and create their own adventure destinations.

Location

The Oregon Country Trails organization currently works with Linn, Benton, Lane, Crook, and Deschutes counties. Many trails take visitors through historic territorial roads and scenic byways.

Signage

Farm Trails have permanent identity signs that are either installed on a single wooden post, or a smaller version is attached to a farmstop's existing entrance signs. These Farm Trail identity signs use a standard brand, with their design using the same colors, fonts, and size. Information included on the identity sign include the name of the farm trail (dominant), name of farm, and farm trail number. Some of the farmstops are information centers for the Farm Trail, designated by a small "Info. Center" hanging sign or "rider."



Honey Tree Apiaries is a farmstop on the Alpine Country Trail. The Farm Trail sign is attached to the regular entrance sign.

The Fruit Loop (Hood River County)

Purpose

The Fruit Loop offers a self-guided tour through the county's Fruit Loop Stands along a scenic 35-mile loop in the Hood River Valley. After touring fruit stands, vineyards, alpacas and lavender farms, visitors can spend some time at one of the local hotels and take part of the many varieties of wine and micro brews Hood River County has to offer. The Loop has been in operation for nearly 20 years.

Location

Hood River County is located along the Columbia River Gorge, about an hour east of Portland. The loop takes visitors through scenic drives and rural roads to visit each of the 31 stops along the route.

Sign Fabrication

Most farm entrance signs are made of wood and either painted, engraved, or both. Some are thick plastic or aluminum metal signs with applied graphics.

Roadway and Entrance Signage

There is no series of Fruit Loop roadway signs, but there are Hood River Scenic Tour Route signs. Trip Advisor mentions that there are no Fruit Loop roadway signs. However, in some cases at the entrance reference is made to the Fruit Loop. See example on the Smiley's Farm sign below—there is mention of Fruit Loop farmstop#8.



Crop and Breed Identification Signs

Purpose

These signs help travelers identify what is growing or being raised in fields along roadways all over the state. To a lesser degree, they are also used within the interior of a farm by some agritourism farm operators to educate visitors. They are a great tool to help educate the public about Oregon agriculture and its importance to their daily lives.

Location

Along the roadside and in the interior of a private farm property, installed on private property.



Costs

From Agri-Business Council of Oregon:

For an 18" x 60" corrugated plastic sign the cost is \$50.00 ABC members / \$60.00 non-members.

For a 12" x 24" corrugated plastic sign the cost is \$30 ABC members / \$40 non-members.

From a Private Sign Shop:

For an 18" x 60" corrugated plastic sign the cost is \$12/sf or less. For a 12" x 24" corrugated plastic sign the cost is \$12/sf or less.

Process

From Agri-Business Council of Oregon:

Orders are made through the Agri-Business Council of Oregon on their website aglink.org. Signs do not come with mounting hardware or fence posts. However, there are six grommets, one on each corner and two in the middle (top and bottom) to affix to a fence with string or zip ties.

Signs can be shipped for \$10 each or picked up at the Agri-Business Council office in Portland.

Throughout the years, the signs have evolved to be easier to read as well as maintain. The Agri-Business Council of Oregon has placed more than 200 signs along the most traveled thoroughfares in Oregon, in partnership with Oregon Women for Agriculture. This program has been helping connect the public with agriculture for more than three decades.

From a Private Sign Shop:

Contact a shop that can produce this type of sign.

Washington County Visitors Association is producing and installing metal road crop and breed signs of similar appearance and size along their tourism routes.

Feature and Heritage Signs

Farmstops install instructional signs that educate the visitor about a crop, breed or other feature of the farm.



Other kinds of educational signs include:

1. A map, or plot, of the farm highlighting points of interest.
2. A historical story of the farm's family heritage.
3. The entire Farm loop map with a short paragraph about each farm. "You are here."

Examples of Historic or Feature Signs



The Historic or Feature Signs should be vibrant and durable. These three examples are made by Pannier.



Feature and Heritage Signs, cont.

Costs

Historic or Feature signs should withstand weather and be recoverable from graffiti, feature one-piece construction with no seal to compromise, be virtually maintenance free and backed by at least a 10-year warranty. The costs for these types of sign start includes the hardware and the design and production of the sign insert. Pricing starts at \$500 for the hardware and \$1000 for the design of the insert.

Customer Service

Signs help visitors feel welcome when they arrive at the farm. A best practice is to have a sign right at the entrance that says, "Welcome" and also gives a mobile phone number to call, or refers to a bell to ring to notify the farmstop operator of their arrival. A neon sign can be seen from the road and helps travelers feel welcome to come in.



Neon signs cost \$25 and up.

Attention Grabbing Signs

Sandwich boards and Burma Shave-style signs are two examples of signage that "reach out and grab the attention of the traveler" as they approach the farmstop entrance. Sandwich boards that are weighted and durable cost around \$100 and often the cost of the first poster is included in the price.



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Safety Signage

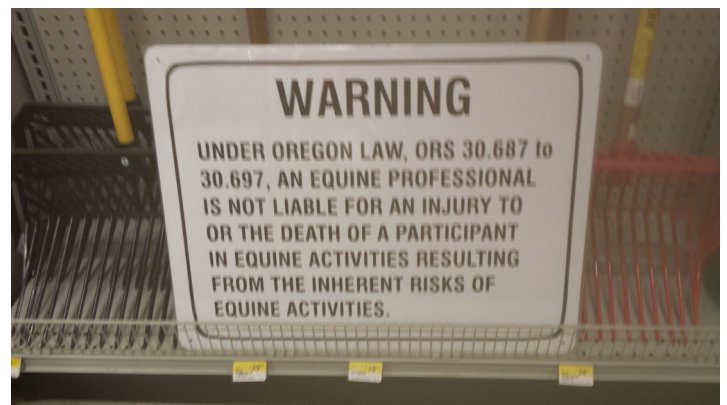
Signs help visitors stay safe on a farm. There are certain inherent dangers on a farm that cannot be controlled by the farmers, such as uneven or slippery ground. Signs can warn visitors to use caution.



Limited Liability

Two laws are observed in Oregon that provide limited liability protection for the farmer: The Equine Limited Liability Law (ORS 30.687) and the Agri-tourism Limited Liability bill (SB 341 from the 2015 legislative session, ORS # in 2016).

Farms are advised to post one or both of these signs at the entrance to their farm, and at other locations on the farm where needed. Signs stating the Equine Limited Liability Law are available for purchase from Farm Stores. Signs for the Agritourism Limited Liability Law should be available in 2016.



Signage that Leads Travelers to Destinations

Half the battle is getting travelers from urban areas and off freeways to travel along secondary roads to find agritourism destinations. In this section, the variety of tourism-related roadside signage is discussed.

Interstate Logo Signs



Purpose

To alert motorists to tourist destinations and essential services located near the freeway exit. These signs are not considered advertising but are officially known as “traffic controlled devices” and provide motorists the opportunity to exit near your tourist destination making them valuable to both motorists and businesses alike.

Location

Near most freeway exits and on most freeway off ramps.

Advertising Rates

Prices range from \$349-\$587 for mainline signs and \$163-\$272 for ramp signs annually. Price is determined based on traffic count for the area.

Process

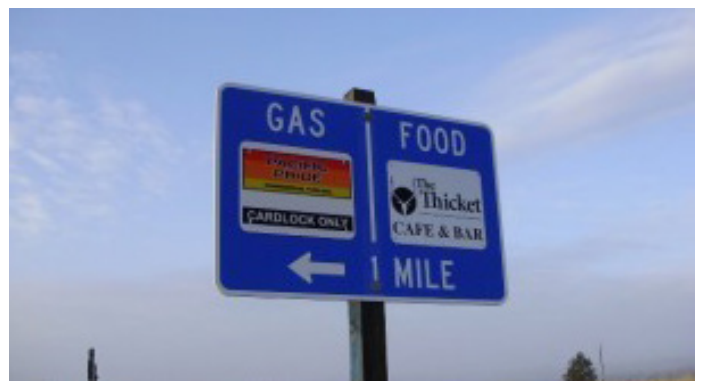
Managed by Oregon Travel Experience (OTE). Go to ORTravelExperience.com and head toward the business section. There are different applications depending on your business or attraction.

Glossary

Mainline sign: The first or primary sign a business has in any given direction of travel is known as the mainline sign. This blue sign precedes the exit ramps on the freeway. They include a service designation (e.g., gas, food, lodging, camping, or attraction), next exit or a specific exit number, and a business logo plaque. On the billing invoice, these signs are referred to as “mainline”.

Ramp sign: The secondary sign a business may have in any given direction of travel is known as the ramp sign. If a business is not visible from the freeway exit ramp, they may require a ramp sign. This blue sign typically includes a directional arrow, a service designation (e.g., gas, food, lodging, camping or attraction) and a business logo plaque. When necessary, mileage is also indicated.

Off-Interstate Logo Signs



Purpose

To alert motorists to tourist destinations and essential services. These are scaled down versions of Interstate Signs with smaller logos for gas, food, lodging, and camping categories. There is no Off-Interstate Logo Sign for the category “Attraction,” however, a Tourist Oriented Directional sign may be what your business needs to help motorists find their way to you via secondary roadways.

Location

On primary or secondary highway routes.

Rates

Prices range from \$196-\$327 for advance signs and \$93-\$152 for intersection signs annually. Price is determined based on traffic count for the area.

Process

Go to ORTravelExperience.com and head toward the business section. There are different applications depending on your business.

Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS)



Purpose

Panels note nearby businesses with business name and mile directions. TOD signs are seen as alternatives to billboard advertising by many businesses, but in fact they are classified as traffic control devices and must meet all regulations set by the Federal Highway Administration and State sign standards.

Location

Along secondary roadways.

Rates

In 2015, prices range from \$196-\$327 for advance signs and \$93-\$152 for intersection signs annually. Price is determined based on traffic count for the area.

Process

Go to ORTravelExperience.com and head toward the business section. There are different applications depending on your business or attraction.

Use by Agritourism Farm Operators

Over the past few years, Clackamas County agritourism farms have been increasing their

purchase of TODS. Examples of local farms using the TODS are: Christopher Bridge Cellars, Alpacas at Marquam Hill Ranch, Alexeli Vineyards and Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm.

While some farms in Clackamas County felt the process of obtaining TODS took longer than it should and the cost was more expensive than they expected, all the farms interviewed were happy with the results in attracting visitors to their farm. One farm said visitors commented that the TODS gave their farm credibility and even created more awareness of the farm's location.

Some farms have chosen to create and install their own "look alike" TODS.

Reportedly, the sign pricing structure has improved recently to make it more affordable for small budget agritourism operations. In addition, there is a perception amongst agritourism farms interviewed that Oregon Travel Experience has become more willing to place signs farther away from major roads. This change in attitude is positive for agritourism destinations which may be more remote.

Glossary

Advance Sign: The first or primary sign a business has in any given direction of travel is known as the Advance sign. This blue sign is usually $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the intersection. It has a directional designation, (e.g., Next Left), and all or part of the registered business name. On the billing invoice, these signs are referred to as "ADV".

Intersection Sign: The secondary sign a business may have in any given direction of travel is known as the Intersection sign. If a business is not visible from the intersection where the motorist turns off of the highway, they may require an Intersection sign. This blue sign typically includes a directional arrow, and all or part of the registered business name. When necessary, mileage is also indicated below the arrow. On the billing invoice, these signs are referred to as "INT".

Travel Information Backlit Signs and Kiosks



Purpose

Backlit display panels with colorful illustrated posters about businesses, services, and locations. Travelers will see attractive and illuminated panels inside the travel information kiosk 24 hours a day, when they stop for a break at one of our OTE-managed rest areas.

A travel information kiosk (or motorist information center) is an open structure housing travel and tourist information at 11 locations across the state.

Location

There are 12 locations throughout Oregon. See map below.



Rates

Backlit display panels have two main sizes; A panels are 4'x4' and B panels are 2'x4'. See below table for pricing structure. If your advertisement is ready for publication OTE will charge \$115-\$150 per panel to print.

Distribution and stocking of brochures at the kiosks, for commercial accounts, start at just under \$2500 per year. Government and non-profit fees are structured differently and will vary.

Process

These signs are installed and maintained by the Oregon Travel Experience. If you are interested in these permits contact their office by email at jenns@oregonte.com or by phone at 503-373-0155.

Signage that Enhances the Visitor Experience

Oregon Scenic Byway Program



Purpose

The Oregon Scenic Byways Program was created as an opportunity for Oregon to take advantage of the national program defined in ISTEA. The Program provides an “umbrella” to include various federal, state, city and county defined scenic roads and highways. The Oregon Scenic Byways Program crosses jurisdictional boundaries and establishes uniform, criteria-consistent signage and statewide promotion. This program also offers an opportunity to preserve and enhance Oregon’s most scenic corridors while ensuring the transportation function is protected. The Mt. Hood Scenic Byway is located in Clackamas County.

Sign Regulations

Scenic Byway Markers

Placement of this marker maybe included on gateway or entrance sign structures. Use of this marker is limited to byways designated by the Secretary of Transportation under the National Scenic Byways Program.

Outdoor Advertising Signs (OAS)

Special regulations apply to Scenic Byways. Existing, permitted OAS’s cannot be relocated to a site within a designated Scenic Byway. This applies to existing OAS’s already located within a

Scenic Byway that were erected before the Byway was designated. These signs cannot be moved to another location even on the same site. (See glossary for full Outdoor Advertising Sign definition)

Other Signs

Signs regulated by the Oregon Travel Experience (including highway business signs and TODS) do not fall under the Outdoor Advertising category and are regulated by the state. If a proposed sign is visible from a state highway, the local jurisdiction should notify the ODOT Outdoor Advertising Sign Program staff to determine if an ODOT permit is required.



Urban and Scenic Bike Signs



Purpose

Bike signs on all roads are for safety and directional purposes. Signs and marks on bikeways must be uniform and consistent for them to command the respect of the public and provide safety to users.

Shared Roadways



In general, no signs are required for shared roadways. However, they are installed for safety reasons to inform roadway users that bicyclists can be expected in the travel lane and near intersections. They might be placed near construction zones where bike lanes are temporarily blocked.

Urban Signs



Bicycle route guide signs are used to indicate a preferred route for bicyclists. They should be used when the signed route provides a clear advantage to bicyclists such as: a low volume street, a short cut, a flatter route, a bicycle boulevard, a bicycle specific destination, or an alternate to a busy, bicycle unfriendly thoroughfare.

Scenic Signs

The Scenic Bikeway Program is supported by a partnership of Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Travel Oregon, Cycle Oregon and ODOT.

Special signs have been created to guide cyclists along state and national touring routes, such as the Oregon Coast Bike Route, Oregon Scenic Bikeways and US National Numbered Bike routes. These signs should be used sparingly, mainly at intersections (with right or left turn arrows) to guide cyclists along the route. For more information about bikeways, a map of all routes and list of all sign placements, see the full Bikeway Handbook on the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department's webpage (noted in bibliography).



Wayfinder Signage

Wayfinding signage is intended to inform drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians of directional recommendations along a street, highway or trail. Signage allows visitors to easily find businesses and attractions as well as to encourage visitors to explore recreational areas and scenic drives without missing any of Oregon's unique beauty.

In rural Clackamas County, there are currently some bicycle, park and tourism destination wayfinding signs throughout the county, and business and bicycle wayfinding signs in cities. Wayfinder signage for agritourism farms are currently 24" square temporary corrugated plastic signs.

Marketing Tips for Sign Design

State signs are regulated to be a specific size based on the motorist's ability to read the information at the speed they are traveling. These are good concepts to note when creating a Roadway or Entrance Sign for your tourist destination.

Below are some key things to keep in mind when designing your sign(s).

Size: It's important to keep in mind how little time a driver has to read and process the information on your sign while moving at highway speeds. Studies have shown that uppercase letters should be at least 6 inches in height and lowercase letters at least 4 1/2 inches in height, not including stems that rise above the height of some letters such as h, k, b, and d.

Clarity: The faster a driver is moving the less they will be able to read off of your sign. Try and only list pertinent information that the motorist needs to know about your location, hours, and events. A sign viewable from 50 feet will allow a motorist traveling at 30 mph roughly 1 second to read it and drivers moving at 60 mph would have half that time.

Location: A driver needs proper safe distance from your sign to allow them to turn off into your location. A good rule of thumb is to give drivers roughly 10 feet for every mph they are traveling (ex. a driver traveling 50 mph needs about 500 ft to safely slow down and maneuver the turn).

Consistency: Since drivers only have a brief moment to view your sign(s) it's important that you retain your brand image throughout your advertising. Keeping the same color scheme, logo, and fonts throughout your signage will make it easier for tourists to identify your businesses at a glance.

Glossary of Terms for Oregon Department of Transportation

Oregon Department of Transportation Outdoor Advertising Sign Program

Note that this glossary is meant to help you gain an initial understanding. Consult the Oregon Revised Statutes and Oregon Administrative Rules for the exact, legal definitions.

Activity Open to the Public: a location where the main purpose is to admit the public or provide service to the public. It includes churches, schools, government buildings, public parks, etc.

Billboard: A term that is not used in the sign statutes or administrative rules. Commonly, it means a large sign, the owner of which leases out the space to others for posting their message. Usually, something people would call a billboard is an “outdoor advertising sign” under state law and needs a permit. However, the size of the structure does not determine whether a sign is an outdoor advertising sign. The exchange of compensation and the location of the structure are the criteria.

Bonus Act: The first federal law that encouraged states to regulate signs along interstates. It provided bonus money for interstate construction for states that volunteered to enforce the regulations. Oregon participated and so is called a ‘Bonus State.’ Therefore, we have an extra layer of sign regulation in Protected Areas of the interstates.

Business: Commercial or industrial operation with the intent of economic gain. It does not need to be open to the public (for example, some manufacturing facilities do not allow public access). However, it must be a legitimate operation as opposed to a sham set up only to make a sign legal. Vacant lots, farm fields, and forests are examples of locations that are not businesses.

Compensation: Exchange of value. It includes money, barter of goods, trade of services, promise of future payment, forgiveness of debt. A sign needs a state permit if compensation is exchanged for putting someone else’s message on your sign, or for placing your sign structure on someone else’s property.

Designated Scenic Area: Stretch of highway that was declared scenic, and therefore off limits for outdoor

advertising signs, during the 1960’s and early 1970’s. The statute that allowed for new designations was repealed, but the existing stretches remain. ODOT cannot write an outdoor advertising sign permit in such an area.

Electronic Variable Message sign (EVM): A sign made up of lights that allow the message to be changed quickly and from a remote location. Until recently these typically had small display areas, were made up of only white lights, and showed boxy letters and images. New technology, including LED signs, allows for large signs, various colors, and full motion.

Federal Highway Beautification Act: 1965 law that required states to implement regulation on signs visible to certain federal-aid highways. Each state entered an agreement with Federal Highway Administration to apply zoning, spacing, size, and lighting restrictions, and to “effectively control” signs, or risk losing 10% of certain annual highway funding.

Freeway: For sign regulation, a “freeway” is a divided highway with at least four traffic lanes, grade separation at intersections, and full access control.

Governmental Unit: Any governmental group, including federal, state, county, city or political subdivision, or an agency of such a government. It includes fire districts and water/soil conservation districts. Signs for governmental units can obtain permit exemptions if the sign is posted to carry out some duty of that government.

LED signs: Type of electronic variable message sign made up of thousands of tiny lights called LED’s (light emitting diodes). Unlike earlier EVM technology, LED signs can be billboard size, have full color, and allow for images that appear to move with video like quality.

Maintain: Routine upkeep and repair of a sign structure short of reconstructing the sign. Painting, changing copy, changing panels, and small repairs are maintenance. Reconstruction includes changing supports, changing support materials, rebuilding after major damage or collapse, and adding a back-up face to an existing sign. Maintaining a sign does not require a special permit; reconstructing a sign does.

Nonconforming: a sign that was legal when constructed, but no longer complies with the law because of a later change in law, or a change in circumstances not due to the sign owner's action. A nonconforming sign cannot be reconstructed unless that will fix the nonconforming problem.

Oregon Motorist Information Act (OMIA): The set of laws that regulate signs along state highways.

Outdoor Advertising Sign: Under state law, a sign posted for compensation, or is that not at a business or an activity open to the public. Unless it qualifies for an exemption, an outdoor advertising sign needs a state permit to be legal.

Prohibited Sign: A sign structure or placement that is illegal regardless of whether the sign needs a state permit. The law lists nine types that are prohibited, mostly for safety concerns.

Protected Area: A stretch of interstate subject to an extra level of regulation on outdoor advertising signs. Under the federal Bonus Act, Oregon received extra interstate construction money in exchange for limiting signs in these areas.

Reconstruct: Changing supports, changing support materials, rebuilding after major damage or collapse, changing support height, and adding a back-up face to an existing sign. Reconstructing an outdoor advertising sign requires a special permit; maintaining a sign does not.

Relocation: Removing a permitted outdoor advertising sign and building a new one in a new location. Your new location must comply with the OMIA, and you must obtain a relocation permit to legally do this.

Relocation Credit: A credit to use in the future to obtain a relocation permit. If you lose your land lease and remove your permitted sign, but do not yet have a spot to rebuild, you can bank the permit as a "relocation credit." You must notify the Sign Program that you lost your lease, your sign is down, and request the credit.

Right of Way: The highway pavement and (usually) some additional width beyond the pavement owned by the state for the sake of safety or future highway expansion. The width varies from place to place, including along one highway. In some cities the right of way is just curb to curb. In other places it may be 100 feet or more on each side of the shoulder. Other than official traffic control

devices, no signs are allowed in state highway right of way.

Scenic Byway: A driving route of outstanding beauty, sponsored and promoted by local citizens, that meets state and national criteria, that is then designated by the Oregon Transportation Commission as a Byway. No new outdoor advertising signs are allowed on Byways, although legal ones that existed when the Byway was first designated are allowed to remain. Oregon's Scenic Byway system includes All-American Roads, National Scenic Byways, State Scenic Byways, and State Tour Routes. All are considered "Byways" for the sake of sign regulation.

State Highway: Along with all highways so designated by the Oregon Transportation Commission, "state highway" for sign regulation includes all roads on the National Highway System (NHS), and all roads that were on the old "Federal Aid Primary" system (a designation the federal government no longer uses, but requires the states to use for sign regulation). This means that some stretches of road that are not identified as "state highway" on usual maps do fall under state sign regulation.

Temporary Sign: A small sign up for a short time that is exempt from needing a state permit. To qualify the sign must be no more than 12 square feet per side, up for no more than 60 days in a year, not be for compensation, not be on a permanent base, and must comply with basic safety regulations. A size variance, up to 32 square feet, is possible.

Tri-Vision sign: A sign face made up of slats that rotate to show up to three separate images one at a time. The law requires minimum times the sign must remain still, and maximum times it may take to rotate. Particular permit requirements also apply.

Visible: Capable of being seen. A sign's message does not need to be legible for the sign to be 'visible' from a state highway, and therefore subject to state sign regulation.

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