

Addendum to Corridor Signing Policy

Section 10: Bush Country Highway Signs (Revised January 2012)

**CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT AND PROPERTY SECTION
PROVINCIAL HIGHWAYS MANAGEMENT DIVISION
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION**



10 Bush Country Highway Signs

For the purposes of this policy, “Bush Country Highways” are listed in Section 10.3 of this policy. Location and billboard signs may be placed within the highway right-of-way (ROW) on designated bush country highways providing they meet the requirements as outlined in this policy. Any new “Bush Country” designations shall be approved by the respective Regional Director.

10.1 Location Signs

The instructions regarding location signs adjacent to bush country highways shall be applied only on highways or parts of highways that have been designated as bush country highways. The instructions shall not be applied to overcome obstructions blocking the view of signs adjacent to highways or parts of highways which have not been designated as bush country highways. Brush shall not be interpreted as “bush” for the purposes of this section. Under no circumstances shall a sign be located upon the highway ROW of a highway because the view of the sign in the normal location is obscured by brush. Brush on the highway ROW shall be cleared with Ministry approval by the sign owner as required to give a clear view of approved business identification signs located on private property (Brush Removal Permit). The Ministry shall not clear brush that is off the highway ROW. Arrangements for clearing brush that is off the highway ROW shall be made between the owner of the property and the owner of the sign(s).

Where a highway has been designated as a bush country highway, the location signs of a commercial establishment may be moved nearer to the highway ROW if these signs would be hidden from the view of approaching traffic by bush. In cases where location signs adjacent to a bush country highway are hidden from the view of approaching traffic by bush upon the highway ROW, they may be moved onto the highway right-of-way under a sign permit.

A location sign that is moved nearer to or onto the highway ROW of a bush country highway in accordance with this policy shall be kept in good repair and in a condition satisfactory to the Ministry.

10.1.1 Location sign requirements

Location signs moved closer to or onto the highway right-of-way of a bush country highway in accordance with this policy shall not:

- a) be more than 11.9 m² (128 sq. ft.) in total area.

- b) be placed such that the front edge of the sign is more than 0.9 m (3 ft.) in front of the bush line, and the location of each such sign shall be as approved by the Ministry. Where bush on the highway ROW is removed, each location sign shall be moved back so that it will be not more than 0.9 m (3 ft.) from the new bush line.
- c) exceed two in number and each sign shall face in a direction different from the other.
- d) be placed less than 46 m (150 ft.) from the sign of another establishment which sign is located upon the highway ROW or less than 46 m (150 ft.) from an official highway sign.
- e) be placed until a permit for the sign(s) has been obtained.
- f) be placed where there is an official guide sign erected to identify the establishment or to direct traffic to the establishment.

10.2 Billboard Signs

Billboard signs on highway ROW or adjacent to bush country highways on private property are permitted providing the requirements as outlined are met.

A billboard sign is a sign which contains a message that is not related to the property that the sign is located on.

10.2.1 Message on the billboard

The message on the billboard must not promote violence, hatred, or contempt against any identifiable group. Identifiable group means any section of the public distinguished by colour, race, ancestry, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or disability.

10.2.2 Billboard sign requirements

A billboard sign must not be:

- a) more than 11.9 m² (128 sq. ft.) in area on highway ROW.
- b) located on the left hand side or median of the highway facing the motorist.
- c) located within 305 m (1,000 ft.) of another billboard sign per direction.
- d) located where the left edge of the sign will be less than the setback as identified in Section 10.2.3 and 10.2.4 of this policy.

- e) placed within 91 m (300 ft.) of the limit of a road, street, or railway that intersects a highway at grade.
- f) placed within 300 m (985 ft.) of an at-grade intersection on a class 1 and 2 highway.
- g) be placed within 3 kms in advance of an interchange on a class 1 and 2 divided highway.
- h) placed within 300 m (985 ft.) from the end of the acceleration lane on a class 1 and 2 divided highway.
- i) placed adjacent to a curve where the radius is less than 1000 m.
- j) located on highway ROW where the billboard sign is visible to an adjacent residential dwelling unit.
- k) as a blank poster panel, advertise “for rent” or contain the name/number of the advertiser/sign operator in lieu of an advertisement on highway ROW for more than six (6) months.
- l) affixed to or mounted upon or be made to form part of a fence.
- m) a contravention of federal/provincial legislation (i.e. advertise restricted products such as tobacco).
- n) erected before a permit for the sign has been obtained.
- o) located within the limits of a Provincial park.
- p) a changeable message sign on highway ROW.

10.2.3 Setback distance for billboards on highway right-of-way

The following setback distance shall apply for signs up to and including 11.9 m² (128 sq. ft.):

- a) Must be set back 10 m (33 ft.) from the edge of pavement on class 1 and 2 divided highways.
- b) Must be set back 9 m (30 ft.) from the edge of pavement on class 1 and 2 (undivided highways) and class 3, 4 and 5 highways.
- c) Where enhanced clear zones are present, the appropriate setback shall apply.

10.2.4 Setback distance for billboards on private property adjacent bush country highways

The following setback distances shall apply:

- a) Signs up to and including 11.9 m² (128 sq. ft.) must be set back 3 m (10 ft.) from the highway property line.
- b) Signs over 11.9 m² (128 sq. ft.), but not over 18.60 m² (200 sq. ft.), must be set back 30 m (100 ft.) from the highway property line
- c) Signs over 18.60 m² (200 sq. ft.), but not over 30.19 m² (325 sq. ft.), must be set back 46 m (150 ft.) from the highway property line.
- d) Signs over 30.19 m² (325 sq. ft.), but not over 60.39 m² (650 sq. ft.), must be set back 84 m (275 ft.) from the highway property line.
- e) Signs greater than 60.39 m² (650 sq. ft.) will not be allowed within the controlled area.

10.2.5 Waiting list

A waiting list will be commenced by the respective Area Office when it is determined that there are no available sites on the highway ROW and private property (combined).

When a waiting list is created, the following shall apply:

- a) One list per highway, per Area Office.
- b) Applicants will appear only once on the list for each highway, per Area Office.
- c) When an applicant is offered a site and accepts, the applicant will be removed from the list. Should the applicant require an additional site, they will be required to re-apply and will be placed at the bottom of the list.
- d) When an applicant declines a site, the applicant will retain their position on the list.

10.2.6 Multiple applications

No one advertiser/sign operator can hold more than one (1) permit per every five (5) consecutive sites, per highway (includes highway ROW and private property).

10.2.7 Municipal Exemptions

Municipal by-law matters pertaining to highway ROW (i.e. Scenic Corridors, Heritage Areas, etc.) may be applied at the discretion of the Regional Director.

10.2.8 Angle of billboard sign as related to highway

The angle of a billboard sign as this relates to the centre line of a highway shall be equal to or greater than 45 degrees whether or not the sign is affixed to a building. That is, if the plane forming the face of the sign was extended in a straight line to intersect the centre line of the highway, the angle this formed would be at the minimum angle of 45 degrees.

10.2.9 Billboard signs in City, Town and Village, etc.

Billboard signs which are located within the limits of a city, town or village and adjacent to an assumed highway shall be subject to this policy. Billboard signs located adjacent to a connecting link are not controlled by the Ministry.

10.2.10 Requirement regarding billboard affixed to a building

A billboard sign located adjacent to a bush country highway may be affixed to a building providing the height of the sign does not exceed 8 m (25 ft.) above the ground. A billboard sign which is affixed to a building shall be on the right side of the highway, facing the motorist. Each such sign must conform to the basic setback provisions as set out in Section 10.2.4.

10.2.11 Signs must be placed within six months of issuance of permit

When a sign permit has been issued, the sign to which the permit applies must be placed or erected within six (6) months of the date of issuance of the permit otherwise the permit shall be void and shall be cancelled. When a permit is cancelled in accordance with this procedure, the fee shall not be refunded.

10.2.12 Message on sign may be changed

The message on a billboard for which a permit has been issued may be changed from time to time (poster panels). If the size and setback of the sign remains the same a new permit is not required. A new permit is only required when the size or setback has been changed.

10.2.13 Changeable message sign

Changeable message signs are only permitted for billboards on private property and must conform to the specifications and requirements set out in section 8.9 of this policy. The issuance of a permit will be based on the size and location of the sign and not the number of individual advertisements. There is no restriction as to the number of individual advertisements displayed on any one changeable message sign.

10.2.14 Permit administration

A sign permit, issued by the Ministry, must be obtained for each billboard sign. It is a requirement of the Ministry that this permit is obtained and that they be renewed annually up to a maximum period of five (5) years at which time a new application may be required from the initial date of the original permit. If, at that time, a waiting list is not yet available, the annual renewal by payment is continued. All sign permits issued prior to September 24, 1994, are not affected by the five (5) years and will remain until such time as the sign site becomes available.

For a sign located on highway right-of-way, the sign permit will be issued in the name of the advertiser/sign operator.

For a sign located on private property adjacent a bush country highway, the sign permit will be issued in the name of the registered property owner. However, when the owner of the property has a documented arrangement with the advertiser/sign operator, the sign permit may be issued to the advertiser/sign operator.

The renewal notice will be issued to either the property owner or the advertiser/sign operator as determined by the permit.

10.3 Bush Country Highway Designation List

The following highways have been designated as bush country highways. Consult your local Area Office for a current listing and exact designation limits.

Central Region

No highways have been designated.

Eastern Region

Only the following highways have been designated:

- Highway 28 from Lakefield northerly to Highway 41.
- Highway 35 northerly from Fenelon Falls.

- Highway 41 from Kaladar northerly Highway 60 (north junction).
- Highway 60 easterly to Killaloe.
- Highway 62 from Madoc northerly to Highway 127.
- Highway 118 westerly from Highway 28.
- Highway 127 from Maynooth northerly to Highway 60.
- Highway 523 from Highway 60 southerly to limit of Hastings County.

Northeast Region

All highways have been designated except the following:

- Highway 11 North Bay By-Pass

Northwest Region

All highways have been designated except the following:

- Thunder Bay Expressway composed of Highway 61, from Chippewa Road northerly to Highway 11/17, and Highway 11/17, from Highway 61 easterly to Lakeshore Road.
- Highway 11/17 (New) from Vibert Road easterly to the Harbour Expressway.
- Highway 17A - Kenora Bypass.

West Region

Only the following highway has been designated:

- Highway 6 from Wiarton northerly to Tobermory