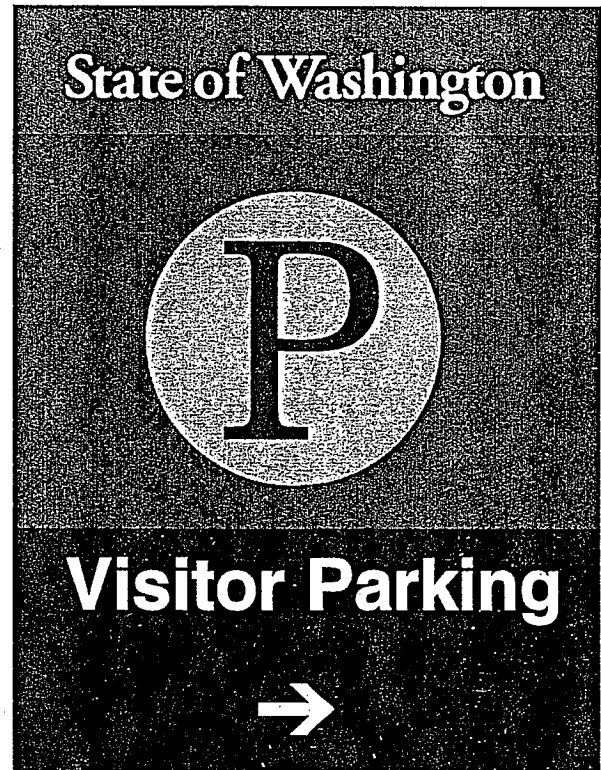




State of Washington

**WASHINGTON STATE CAPITOL CAMPUS**  
**Sign Standards for**  
**State Buildings and Grounds**



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# Sign Standards for State Buildings and Grounds

## INTRODUCTION

State agencies have a mandate to provide timely information about their services and the location of their facilities to their clients and visitors. In addition to signage, this information can be provided by:

- telephone instruction and information for visitors with car/cellular phones
- brochures that include campus and area maps, location of the visitors center, suggested parking areas, information about basic facilities, telephone numbers of people to contact, etc.
- telephone books with consistent maps of the area including state building numbers
- newsletters and organizational mailings
- information kiosks including telephone/electronic information centers located at strategic centers of activity

Signs must "go with the flow": We need to anticipate the routes of our visitors and provide just enough signage to lead them unobtrusively along their paths.

For the Capitol Campus, it is most effective if communication begins on the freeway with directional signs to appropriate off-ramps and/or also display a telephone number for people with car phones to call for directions. Signs continue at the freeway exits, announce the arrival to the campus, and guide people to the visitors' center and parking areas.

At the visitors' parking areas, a map and clear signs direct people towards nearby buildings and agencies. Along the path, signs should quietly lead the way.

What is included in the sign standards?

Included in the standards are:

- a philosophy for sign use. The **General Information Section A** provides the underlying principles upon which the design details are based. When the details don't cover a specific situation, the philosophy in the **General Information** section should guide the design
- procedures for implementing one sign or a series of signs is included in the **Decision Matrix of Section A**
- **general Guidelines** for design and use of signs in Washington State Government
- specific signs are in the **Design Details Section C**

### What is the purpose of the sign standards?

- create a safe, comfortable, and welcoming experience for our visitors
- provide unified, consistent signs that are consistent with campus maps, kiosks, and information from the visitor's center
- provide quality signs, quickly and economically maintained using state resources

### Who should comply with the sign standards?

The standards have been developed primarily for the Washington State Capitol Campus. All buildings and agencies on the campus are to use them

- facilities located off the Capitol Campus are encouraged to use the standards when possible and reasonable
- standards are to be applied to new and replacement signs. New signs slowly replace old signs as part of a normal sign maintenance cycle. The intent is to minimize budget impact at one time

### How are the design standards used and where can you get help?

- start with **Section A, The Decision Matrix**. Decision trees show development process and who is involved. In most cases, the first contact is with the state's sign shops
- develop a signage plan for your facility or area by applying the principles given in **Section B: General Information: Philosophy of the Signs Standards**
- request training and consulting from the Signs Review Committee. The sign shop will help make the contact
- request assistance from the Signs Review Committee when non-standard or unusual signs may be required
- use this standard manual as a reference for sign designs, specifications and orders. Order signs from the sign shop through normal purchasing channels

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## General Information

### PHILOSOPHY OF THE SIGN STANDARDS

#### Who are the "audiences"?

The primary "audiences" of our signs are visitors: business visitors, legislative visitors and tourists.

- **business visitors** are people who have business with a specific office or person. They need clear, simple, directions from the Interstate or arterial to visitors parking and from parking to their destination office
- **legislative visitors** are legislators and those people who have business with them. They need quick access to parking near the Capitol offices and clear directions to their destination offices or meeting rooms
- **tourists** are people who wish to see the Capitol, enjoy the history, and learn about our government. They need clear, simple directions from Interstate 5 to the Visitor's Center, and from the Visitor's Center to all other Capitol Campus buildings

The secondary "audiences" of our signs are state employees. Employees need directions and warnings about safety and emergency situations and may need occasional information about routine operations.

#### What do we want our signs to communicate?

The ideal: Our visitors arrive comfortably at their destinations without being aware of the signs that unobtrusively have guided them.

- signs "go with the flow". Signs are placed in the sequences that our visitors follow as they move towards their destinations and placed with sensitivity to the needs of physically challenged visitors
- sign sequence starts near the exit from the interstate or main arterial that our visitors will use
- signs are designed for the size, message and location that fits the needs of our visitors as they move along their paths
- signage is coordinated to "flow" with campus maps using the same identification system. Visitors will typically have maps provided from map boxes in visitor's parking or the visitor's center

#### What image do we want to convey?

Beyond the sign content which instructs, there is also implied information about the organizations which put up the signs. This is the secondary job that signs can perform. And we want to establish the following impression:

- signs create the image that state government is open and accessible while being stable, professional and dignified
- signs reinforce a sense of place, history, and State identity
- signs convey restraint and discipline, avoiding a perception of extravagance
- signs have a sense of consistency, organization and unity

#### How can we avoid sign clutter?

Signs can proliferate and clutter the campus. It can be ugly, and confusing to visitors. Guidelines

which can help:

- limit the number of signs. Only provide signs that “go with the flow”
- use the smallest, least obtrusive sign that will meet the need. Consider the speed of travel and distance from the sign. Large signs with simple messages are used when the viewer is driving a car towards a sign or intersection. Small signs with more complex informational messages can be used for pedestrians
- ask: “Is there a better way to communicate than by using a sign?”
- consider how the sign fits with other, existing signage. Will it add to clutter? Will there be too many messages for the visitor to read quickly, or clearly? Could one new sign incorporate messages from two or more existing permanent signs?
- consider how sign fits with the environment. Is it unobtrusive? Does it disrupt a natural, historical or beautiful place?

#### **How do we coordinate with other communication items?**

- when developing a new sign program and/or requesting a sign, note that important information may need to be included on the other communication products such as the aerial map, brochure, or telephone directories, etc.?
- talk to the state sign shop

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## Decision Matrix

### WHO'S IN CHARGE?

The first contact will be with your state sign shop.

The sign shop will assist you to determine how your signage needs can best be met and fit within these standards.

Several "decision trees" are provided on the following pages to show what processes are followed. Select the decision tree for the type of sign(s) needed. The numbers correspond to the decision tree charts:

1. Signs for division spaces
2. Building or agency-wide signage
3. Exterior signage: on and off Site
4. Campus regulatory signs
5. Signs adjoining city streets
6. Traffic regulatory and warning signs
7. Sign requests from legislators
8. Signs for leaseholder facilities

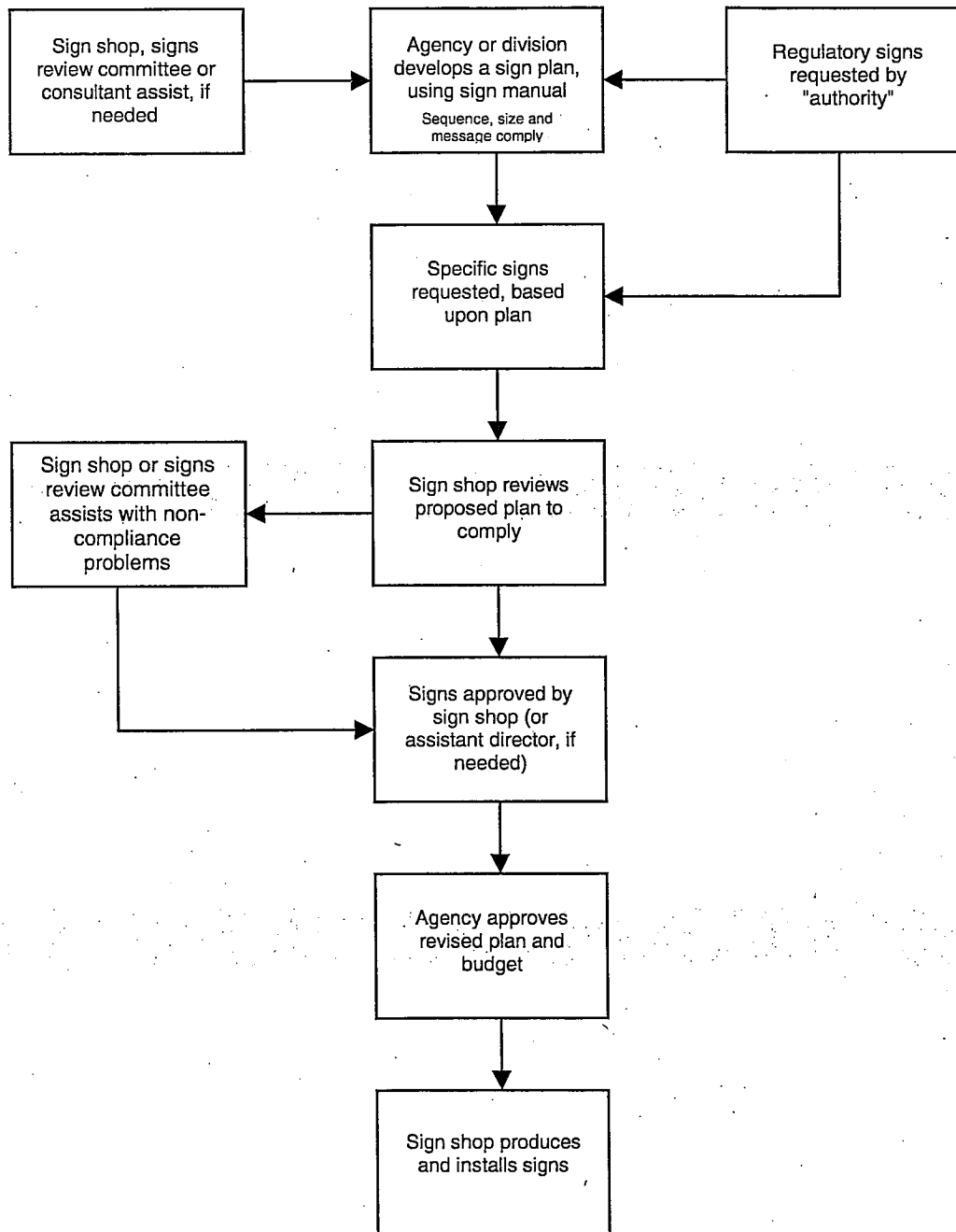
When your signage requires special study or falls outside the sign standards, your request will be forwarded to the Signs Review Committee. The Review Committee will work with you and the signs shops to develop the best solution that meets your needs and complies with the philosophy and the standards.

If no agreement can be reached for a specific signage request, the Assistant Director, Division of Capitol Facilities, General Administration, will make a final determination.

# Decision Tree 1

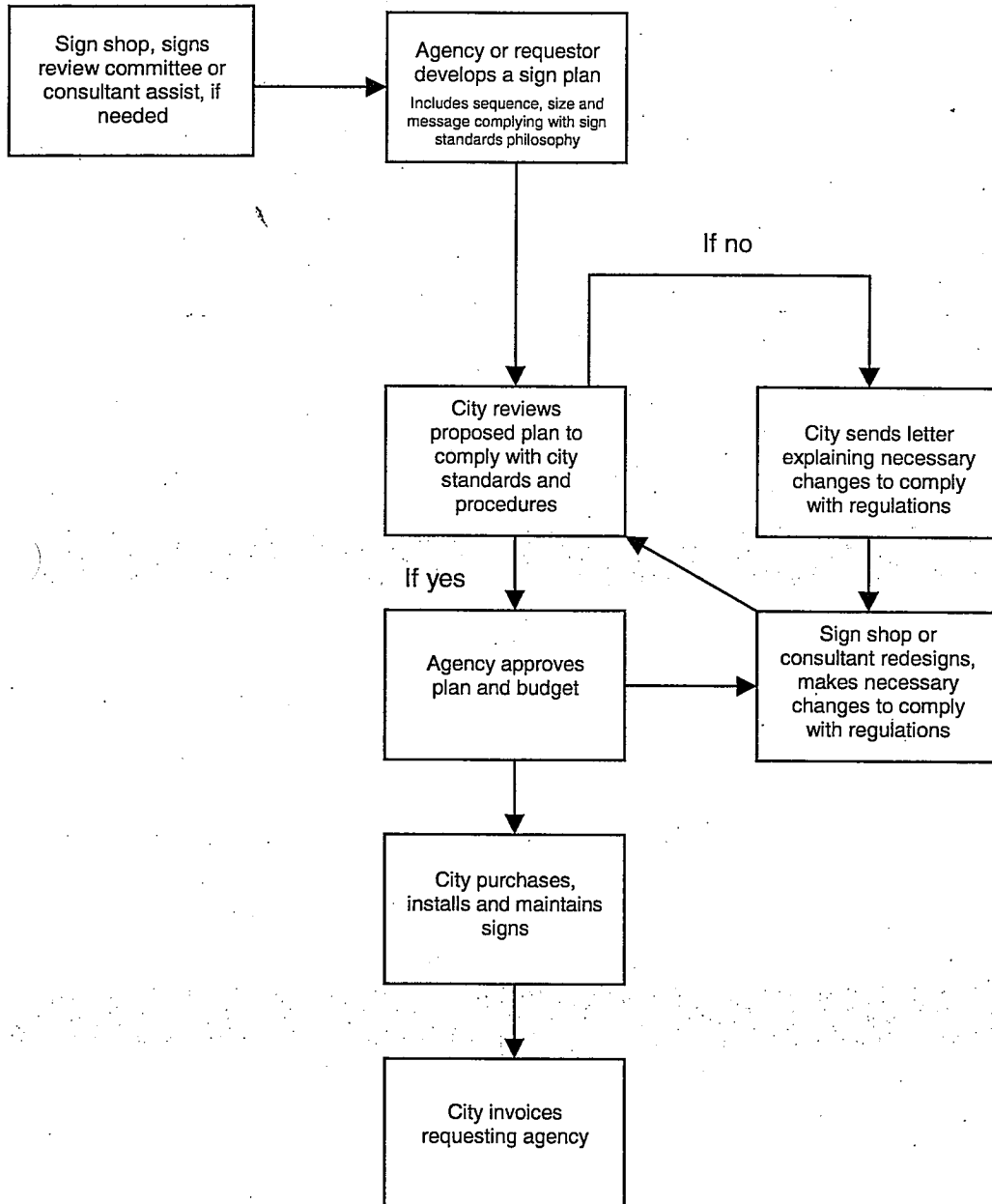
## BUILDING OR AGENCY-WIDE SIGNAGE

For all internal and external identification, direction, information, traffic information and parking, and signs required to provide legal notice or warning, other than street traffic regulatory signs. (For these, see decision tree number 2.)



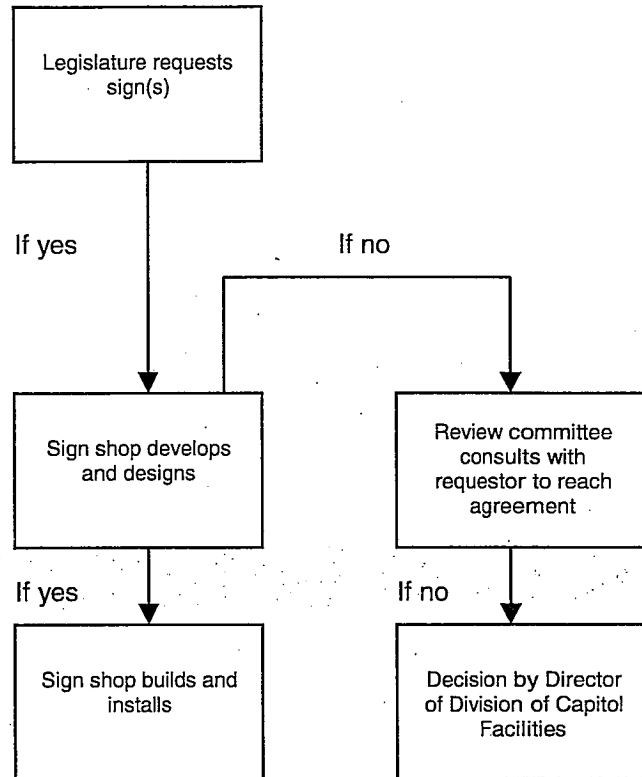
## Decision Tree 2

### CITY STREET SIGNS



## Decision Tree 3

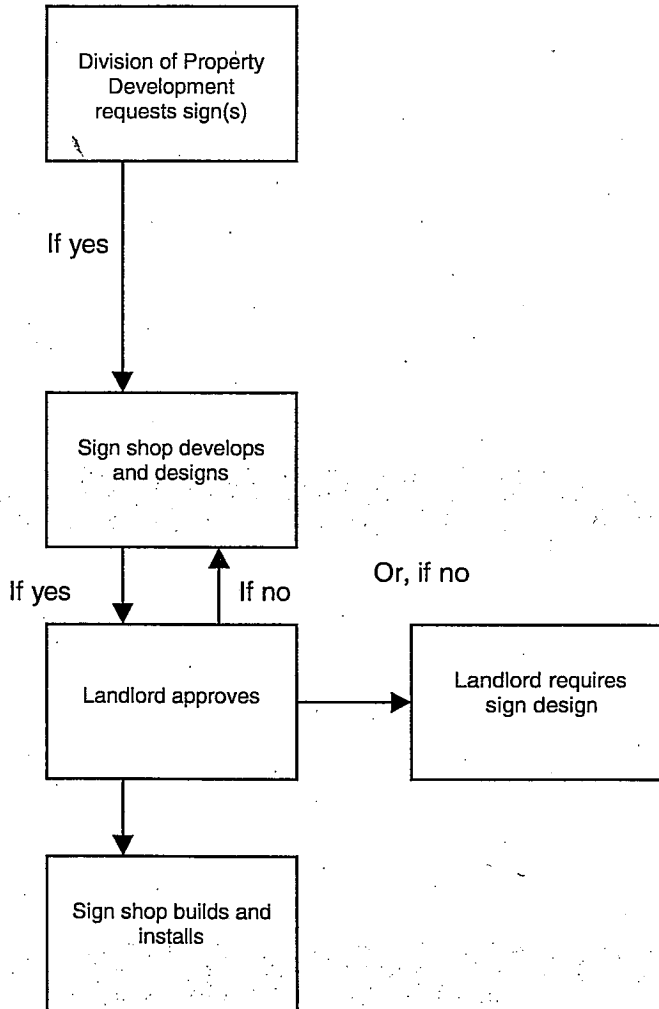
### REQUEST FROM LEGISLATIVE OFFICES



## Decision Tree 4

### LEASEHOLDER REQUESTS

Signs within buildings leased by the state.



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## Signage Instructions and Information

### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

#### Sign classifications (types)

For the purposes of this manual, there are six classifications of signs:

- orientation
- direction
- identification
- information
- regulation
- warning

#### Sign sizes

Sign is designed as small as possible within the context of the speed, distance, and situation of the audience.

Refer to Sign Design Details, Section C.

#### Sign symbols

Symbols cross barriers of language and culture. They can often take the place of many words and are therefore ideal for use on signs.

- whenever possible, use symbols on signs in lieu of text
- design or use symbols which are immediately identifiable to the general audience of visitors and are accepted international symbol standards
- apply Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and WAC 51-20 (Washington Barrier-free Regulations) standards to symbols that fall under this application

#### Sign colors

Sign color is a powerful communication element. The background color and the color of lettering and symbols of a sign should fit its classification and purpose. Color brings simplicity, unity, and clarity to communication.

The American with Disabilities Act requires a 70% contrast between text and background colors.

#### Sign shapes

Sign shape is another powerful communication element. As with color, shape communicates best when it fits its classification and purpose simplicity, unity, and clarity to communication.

## Standard Sign Colors

This chart shows the standards for colors which will be followed by the state sign shop.

Color	Function	Application
Red	Meaning As background As legend/text	Stop or prohibited Used only for stop sign Used for prohibitive signs such as "do not enter", yield, and for the circular outline and diagonal bar on the prohibitory symbol
Black	Meaning As Background As legend/text	General Regulation Not used as background Used for regulatory signs on white, yellow or orange background
White	Meaning As Background As legend/text	Regulation and information Used for regulatory, traffic, identification and information signs Used on green blue and brown signs
Green	Meaning As Background As legend/text	Direction, orientation, guidance, identification Not used as background Used for regulatory signs on white, yellow or orange background
Yellow	Meaning As Background As Legend/text	General warning and special permission to park Used only for warning signs Not used for text
Orange	Meaning As Background As Legend/text	Construction, maintenance, temporary Used only for construction and maintenance signs Used on temporary signs
Blue	Meaning As Background As Legend/text	Handicapped, medical information and motorist service guidance Used for handicapped and motorist service information handicapped parking and information, and medical services information
Brown	Meaning As Background	Visitors, recreation, motorist service information Visitors, recreation direction and guidance, and historic signs

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## Sign Illumination and Reflection

All traffic control regulatory and warning signs shall be of reflective material to show the same background shape, color, and legend as prescribed for daylight.

- directional signs that direct vehicular traffic shall be of reflective material
- when reflective signs are located overhead or in such locations that vehicle lights will not effectively reflect their messages, the signs are to be illuminated by one of the following:
  1. A light behind the sign face, illuminating the main message or symbol, or the sign background, or both, through a translucent material; or
  2. An attached or independently mounted light source designed to direct essential uniform illumination over the entire face of the sign; or
  3. Some other effective device that will make the sign clearly visible at night.
- the requirements for sign illumination are not considered to be satisfied by street or highway lighting or by strobe lighting

### Locations

Locations, sizes and heights of signs shall be consistent with those shown in the Design Details for each type of sign. Consistency is the key—people expect to find comparable signs in similar sizes, shapes, and locations.

### Materials

Materials shall be as shown in the Design Details whenever possible. The intent is to allow the state sign shop to determine the appropriate materials to fit the standards. This encourages inexpensive and easy-to-maintain signage that is consistent with the sign shops' capabilities.

### Installation

In most cases the sign shop will be installing and maintaining the signage. When the local city has jurisdiction of the signs, the city may provide, install and maintain the sign—but at the expense of the “owner” agency.

On the Capitol Campus the City of Olympia will provide, install and maintain signage adjoining city streets. Special directional signs must be coordinated with the General Administration Sign Shop to determine who has jurisdiction.

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## Exterior Signs

### GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Sign Locations

Sign locations shall comply with the **Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices** and with the sign ordinance of the local community having jurisdiction. *On the Capitol Campus, signs located adjacent to roadways shall comply with requirements of the City of Olympia.*

#### Roadways

All traffic regulatory and warning signs should be located on the right-hand side of the roadway where the driver could expect them. The signs should be located sufficiently in advance of the necessary action that the driver can safely react to their message.

#### Parking areas

Parking signs should be located at the entrance to a parking area. Some signs may be required within the area, but keep the number of signs to a minimum. Remember that the primary purpose of sign standards is to create a safe, comfortable, and welcoming experience for our visitors. Over use of negative, restrictive parking signs will create a negative impression on visitors.

#### Pedestrian areas

Use signs along sidewalks, walkways, and pathways to protect, direct, guide, and inform the visitor. The signs should be small and unobtrusive but precisely located along the path of travel so that they provide exactly the correct information when needed. Follow recommendations in the Design Details regarding the specific location of a certain sign size and design.

#### Non-pedestrian areas

Signs located within landscaped or lawn areas should relate to their primary audience but have a minimal impact on the historical, architectural and environmental context of the area. This is especially important when locating building and landmark identification signs.

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## Direction, Guidance and Information Signs

### COORDINATE SIGNAGE WITH OTHER INFORMATION

Campus maps will be available from map boxes in the visitor's parking areas and from the Visitor's Center. When possible, relate signs to local landmarks, kiosks and building identification to help visitors locate themselves on their maps.

#### Campus gateways

Provide campus gateway signs at the entrances from the Interstate and major arterials. On the State Capitol Campus, provide signs in these locations (see page 29 for example):

- 14th Street and Jefferson intersection (exit from Interstate)
- Capitol Blvd. at south side of campus near pedestrian overpass, and
- Capitol Blvd. at north side of campus

#### Campus maps and kiosks

The Map Signs need to be installed in many locations around the campus and in parking lots with "you are here" arrows, and information. One opportunity which uses existing structures is to attach the maps to *some* Kiosks in the plaza areas of the campus (see page 29 for examples).

#### Building identification

Located at the main entrance(s), the building name is included along with the primary tenant agencies. The size and location of the building identification signs on the Capitol Campus shall be as shown in the **Design Details, Section C**.

At secondary entrances to the building, signs showing the building identification alone should suffice. Consider the paths of our typical visitors. In some cases, the building name and primary tenants may be needed at secondary entrances.

#### Directional

Provide directional signage, similar to example on page 32-33, along the common routes of visitors. When signs adjoin a city street the location and design of directional signage must be coordinated and approved by the city.

For readability from an automobile, the number of directions shown on any one sign shall not exceed three. In cases where directional signs are primarily for pedestrian use, more than three lines of type and directions may be used.

Each direction shall be on one line only. Long direction names should be shortened (or abbreviated, if absolutely necessary) in preference to "wrapping" the name onto two lines.

Directional arrows shall be standardized as shown in the Design Details. Arrows pointing left shall be located on the left side of the sign, arrows pointing right located on the right side. Group the direction lines on the sign such that all left pointing arrows are together, right arrows are together, and straight ahead arrows point "up" and are grouped at the top of the sign.

### **arking identification and directional**

Parking signs shall be similar to those shown in the Design Details. Parking for visitors should be clearly marked. Avoid prohibitive parking signage in, or near, visitors parking areas except when absolutely necessary. The intent is to welcome visitors and avoid negative restrictions.

Parking control signage on city streets should comply with local city standards. If none are available, use the **Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices** as a reference.

### **Pathway signs**

Signs along pedestrian pathways should be small, unobtrusive, and comply with the directional signage standards discussed above. The intent is to lead visitors along their paths with small "nudges" or reminders placed at strategic points where they have a choice of directions. Be careful not to "abandon" visitors somewhere along the path.

### **Traffic signs**

**City standards apply:** On the Capitol Campus, the City of Olympia has jurisdiction. The General Administration sign shop will coordinate with the city. The City of Olympia uses *the Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* as its standard.

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## Interior Signs

Interior signs shall comply with those shown in the **Design Details in Section C**, (style examples on Pages 35-36).

Materials shall be as shown in the Design Details whenever possible. The intent is to allow the state Sign Shops determine the appropriate materials to fit the standards. This encourages inexpensive and easy to maintain signage that is consistent with the Sign Shops' capabilities.

The colors used for interior signs should be chosen to match the interior colors of the spaces. Only one color combination shall be used per floor. Preference is to use one color combination throughout an entire building. The American with Disabilities Act requires 70% contrast between text and background.

### West and East Capitol Campus

Prior to 1994 there were two separate interior signs standards for East and West Campus. Neither of these standards comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and must be phased out. These new standards do not differentiate between East and West Campus.

### Lobby/reception areas

Each building entrance located on a primary visitor travel path should have a building directory showing locations of primary tenants. The directory is the first step on the path and should move visitors to a location where directional signage can take over.

### Directional

Provide directional signage similar to along the common routes of visitors.

Minimize the number of directions shown on any one sign. Each direction shall be on one line only. Long direction names should be shortened (or abbreviated, if absolutely necessary) in preference to "wrapping" the name onto two lines.

Directional arrows shall be standardized as shown in the Design Details. Arrows pointing left shall be located on the left side of the sign, arrows pointing right located on the right side. Group the direction lines on the sign such that all left pointing arrows are together, right arrows are together, and straight ahead arrows point "up" and are grouped at the top of the sign.

### Destination

Destination signage includes office, conference room, work station, rest room, and other similar signs. Most of these signs must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Provide destination signage similar to those in the **Design Details, Section C**. The size of sign should be as small as possible, considering the distance that it will be viewed. It is important to use a consistent size, shape and location for destination signage. Consistency helps everyone to easily locate their destination, but it is especially critical to the visually impaired.

### Personalized and ad hoc signs

Personalized and ad hoc signs can easily lead to clutter and distraction if not used with discretion. The ideal: have the sign shops provide all signs.

From a practical point of view, a few locally prepared signs are inevitable. Prepare adhoc signs using a word processor. Print them on a laser printer and use a type style and size and a paper color that closely matches the production signage.

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## Design Details

The detail design section of this manual provides examples of signs for the following applications:

- direction signs located near roadways
- direction signs along pedestrian ways
- building identification signs
- building numbering signs
- interior directories and direction signs
- interior destination signs

Signage that is used along city streets or highways is not included here. Local city standards will apply. Typically, Washington cities use the *Federal Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

## EXAMPLE: EXTERNAL IDENTIFICATION

### Gateway Sign: Entry to the Capitol Campus

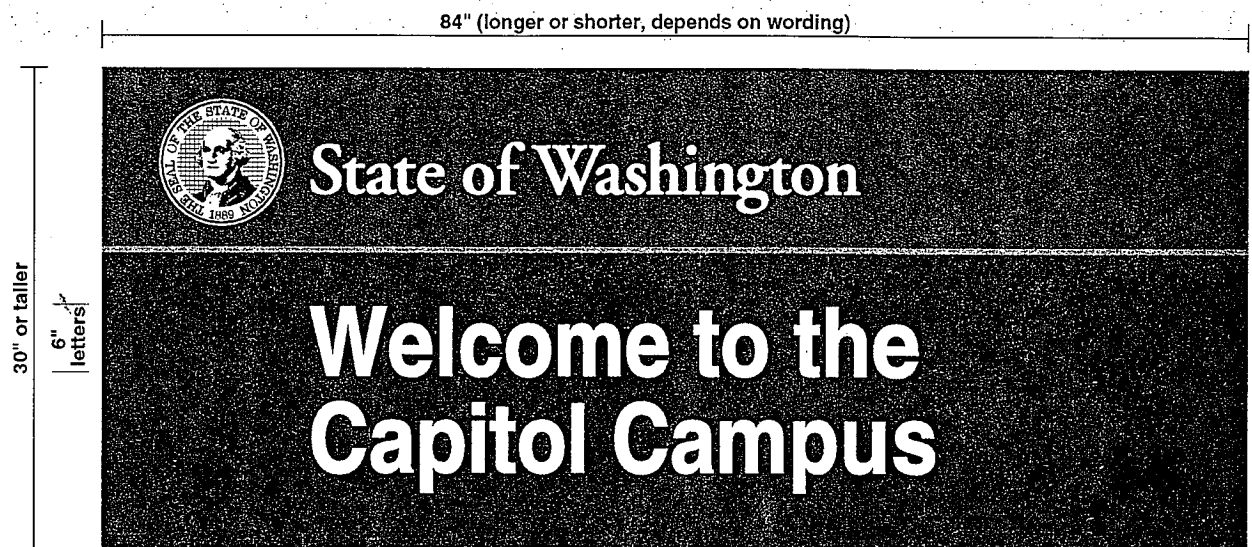


Figure 1

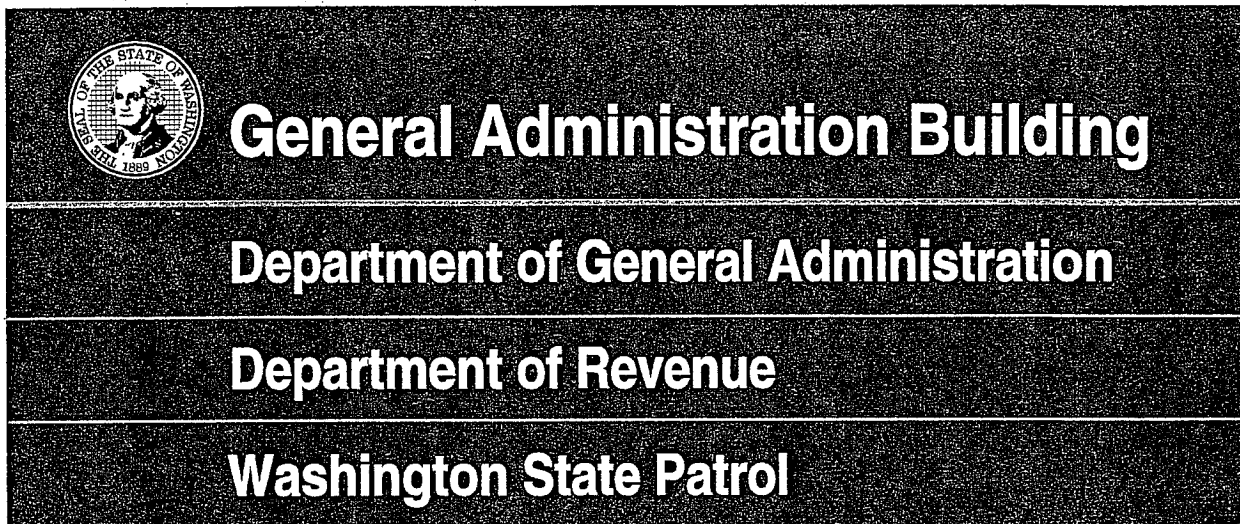
The colors used throughout the exterior signage program are constant. The top segment is green (Pantone 3298), with a teal field (Pantone 3035) below. Between the two is a yellow line (Toyo CF8166).

The state seal is on a white background which is wider than the seal border.

"State of Washington" is in Garamond Semi-bold lettering. Type in the teal field is Helvetica Medium. All type is upper and lower case except for short words such as "to" and "the", which are all in lower case letters.

**EXAMPLE: BUILDING IDENTIFICATION**

Large scale signage for buildings



**Figure 2**

Only the building name and major tenants are listed on the sign. Consistent with this standard, a green field is above, yellow stripe next and teal field below.

Garamond Semi-bold type is on the green field for building name.

Helvetica Medium condensed is on the teal field listing the major tenants.

**EXAMPLE: EXTERIOR IDENTIFICATION/DIRECTION SIGNS**

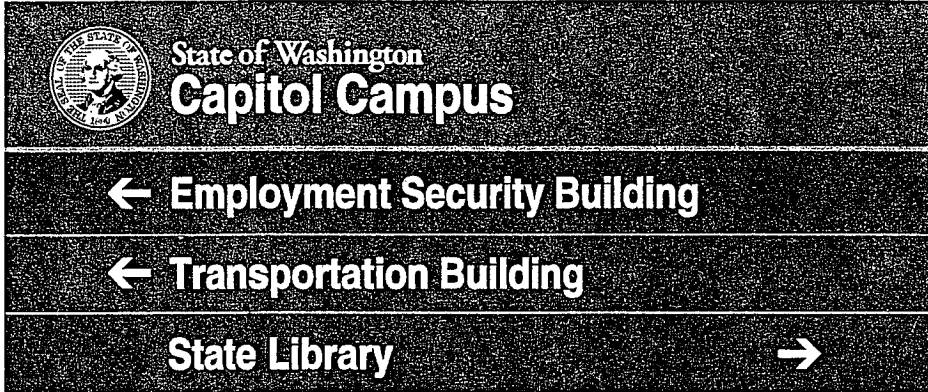
Direction sign to visitor parking



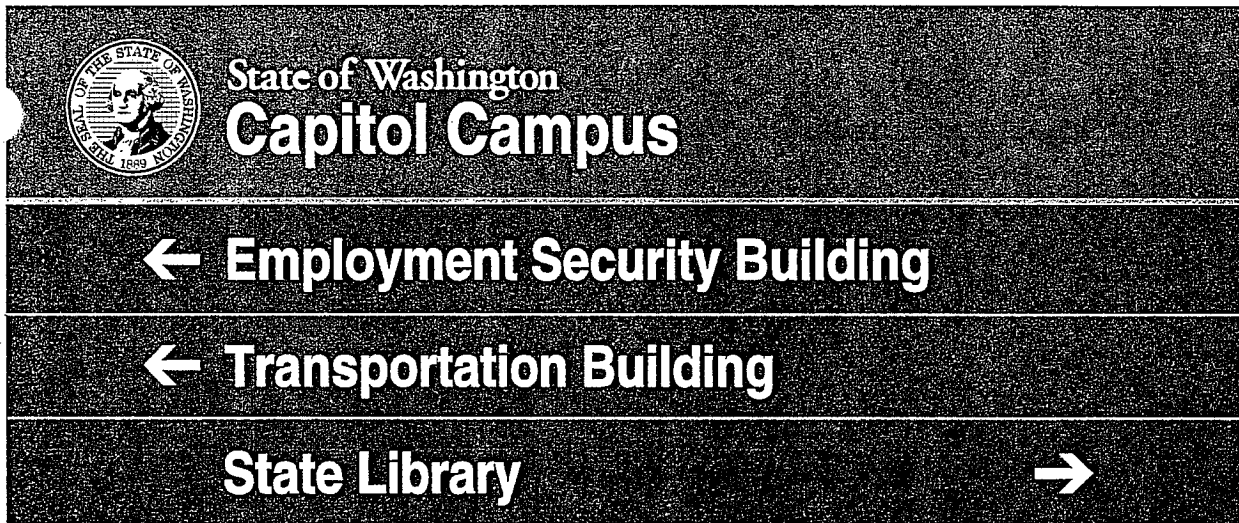
Figure 3  
30 inches width by 48 inches height

**EXAMPLE: EXTERIOR DIRECTION SIGNS**

Direction sign – pedestrians



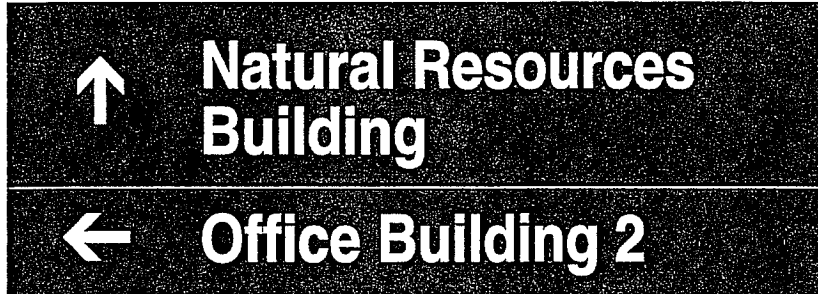
Direction sign – vehicles



The major difference between these two signs is the scale. The vehicle version is larger for better viewing distance. Directional arrows pointing forward (up) or to the left, are to the left of the building name. Those pointing right are on the right. Vehicle signs are to be along major roads such as 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> avenues, Jefferson, Maple Park etc. The pedestrian signs are only for major walkways. The smaller trail marker sign, shown on the next page, is for locations where larger signs are not needed.

**EXAMPLE: DIRECTION SIGNS**

Direction sign trail marker 2

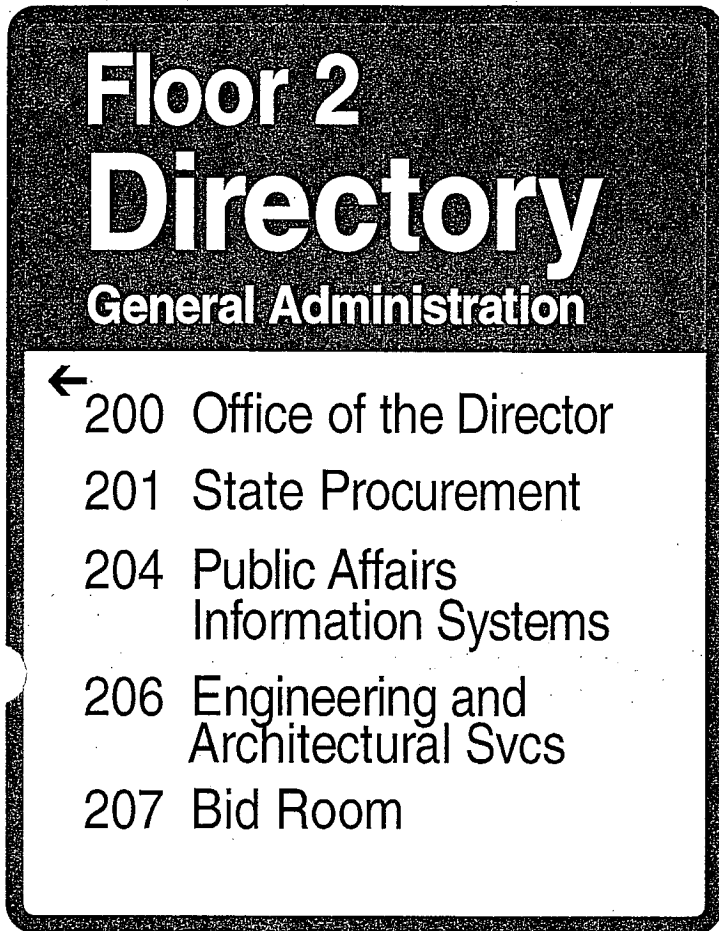


The description of this sign is with its companion signs on the previous page. This sign can be placed on or next to buildings, such as in the multi-level plaza area between the Natural Resources Building, Highways-Licenses and Office Building 2.



**EXAMPLE: INTERIOR DESTINATION SIGNS**

Directory



This sample of the interior sign shows the style, text types, and proportions. The two tone theme used in the exterior signs is carried here as well. The signs will comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act guidelines to improve accessibility to the physically challenged.

Garamond is used for the large room numbers.

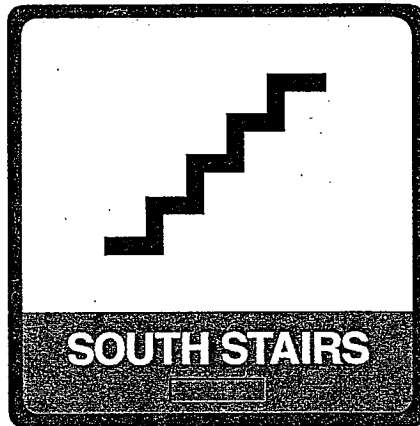
Helvetica medium is used for the name of office(s).

The interior signs will be consistent within a building.

The colors will vary depending on the interior design of the space, but the design will be the same.

**EXAMPLE: INTERIOR DESTINATION SIGNS**

Typical examples of restroom, stairway and room sign

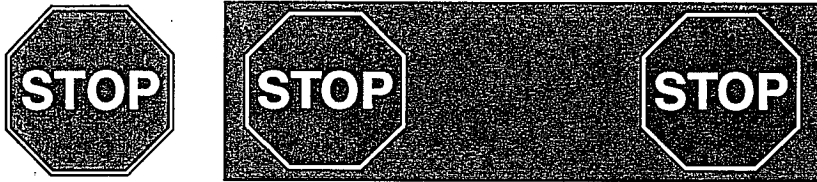


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## Appendix A Parking Garages

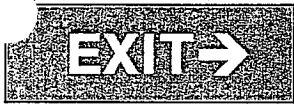
### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Signs will be located and sized to "fit the flow"... the right sign just when you need it
- Too many signs in one place will be ignored by motorists
- Rely on symbols and visual clue rather than words whenever possible
- Be consistent in sign colors, shape, and location



#### Stop – White on red (reflective) with dark gray background

- Stop signs are double (two per hanging board, with dark gray background)
- Ceiling hung with flexible cable, bottom at 6'10"



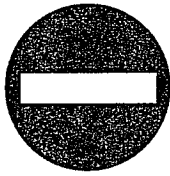
#### Exit – White on green (reflective)

- An exit sign will always be visible from any single place in garage
- Some may be internally lit
- Ceiling hung with flexible cable, bottom at 6'10"



#### One Way – White on black (reflective)

- Locate over the traffic flow path so they are visible from a car stopped at a stop sign
- Supplement with ground painted arrows
- Ceiling hung with flexible cable, bottom at 6'10"



**Wrong Way – white on red (reflective), with gray background**

- Located only at critical points where confusion may be disastrous



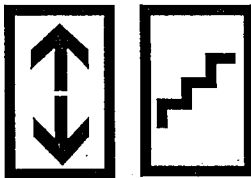
**Crosswalk – black on yellow w/red stripes**

- Limit to crosswalks with high vehicular and pedestrian traffic
- Ceiling hung with flexible cable, directly above the crosswalk
- All crosswalks will have ground hash markings



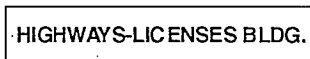
**Pedestrian – White on blue**

- Walkway designated by two parallel white stripes, 3 feet apart
- Ground painted pedestrian figure periodically painted in the walkway
- Ceiling hung pedestrian direction signs located at selected points above the walkway



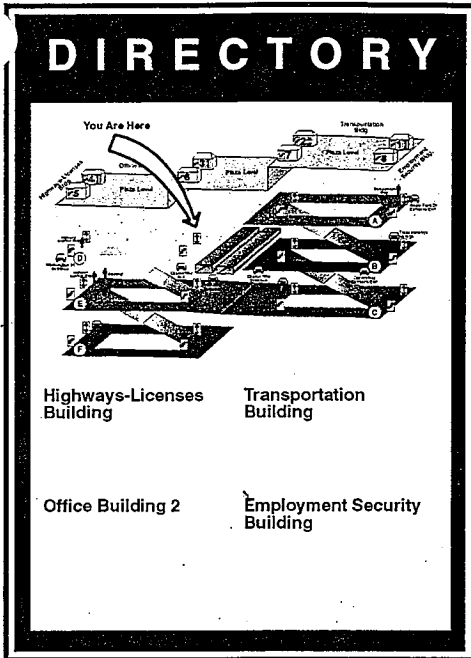
**Elevator/Stairs – Black on white**

- Use symbols to designate
- Identify elevators and stairs by number or letter to help with orientation



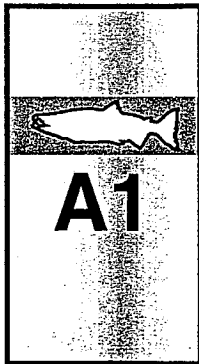
**Building Identification – Black on white**

- Wall painted building identification sign, visible from throughout the garage
- Used to help with orientation and way finding



**Directory – white on blue border**

- Pedestrian oriented
- Color coded parking levels
- Show, “You are here”, along with key building and garage entries/exits
- Located at central pedestrian points



**Garage Level – symbol: white w/black border on color code, band: color code on white, letter and number: black on white (specific to Plaza Garage)**

- Designates level letter, row number, color code and special symbol



**Change Level – white on blue**

- Locate at transition points between levels in garage to indicate path to the next level

**Level Number and Color Codes**

- Maintain existing number or letter designations
- Also include color coding for level designations...tied to directories