

CHAPTER 2K. TOURIST-ORIENTED GENERATOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNS

Section 2K.01 Purpose and Application

Support:

00a The “Tourism Area and Corridor signing program” contains further information regarding Tourist-Oriented Generator signs. The Guidelines can be obtained from the Maryland State Highway Administration’s Office of Traffic & Safety, Traffic Engineering Design Division (TEDD) at the address shown on Page i.

Standard:

00b **Tourist-Oriented Directional signs shall not be used along State owned, operated, and maintained roadways.**

Support:

01 Tourist-oriented directional signs are guide signs with one or more sign panels that display the business identification of and directional information for eligible business, service, and activity facilities.

Standard:

02 **A facility shall be eligible for tourist-oriented directional signs only if it derives its major portion of income or visitors during the normal business season from road users not residing in the area of the facility.**

Option:

03 Tourist-oriented directional signs may include businesses involved with seasonal agricultural products.

Standard:

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

05 **Where both tourist-oriented directional signs and Specific Service signs (see Chapter 2J) would be needed at the same intersection, the tourist-oriented directional signs shall incorporate the needed information from, and be used in place of, the Specific Service signs.**

Option:

06 Tourist-oriented directional signs may be used in conjunction with General Service signs (see Section 2I.02).

07 Section 2K.07 contains information on the adoption of a State policy for States that elect to use tourist-oriented directional signs.

07a Maryland has established the following policy “Guide Signing for Points of Interest and Traffic Generators” for the state highway system. The type of traffic generator, volume of trips, distances from point of signing, and other miscellaneous warranting criteria, are to be used in determining the need for special guide signing for the various types of traffic generators for both freeway and conventional highway applications.

Standard:

07b **Only those traffic generators listed in Table 2K-1, 2K -2 and 2K -3 are to be signed for. Generators not listed shall be referred to the Office of Traffic & Safety for further review. Signs shall not convey days that the facilities are open nor shall they contain the hours of operations. Farmer's markets established by the Maryland Department of Agriculture are excepted. Special guide signs placed for traffic generators shall not display special event information.**

Guidance:

07c Part-time signs should not to be considered for use.

Option:

07d In those areas of the state where the major highway ADT's double during the months of peak traffic flow, the volume of visitors may be halved in determining whether or not special guide signing is warranted.

Standard:

07e **If requested, there are many historical points of interest for which the need for signing does not fit the normally applied criteria. A signing procedure exists for these types of facilities that includes the following:**

- A. **The point of interest shall be historical in nature and be so designated by the Maryland Historical Society or through designation as a national landmark.**
- B. **The facility shall have something of value to see throughout the year during normal visiting hours even through the structures associated with the site may be closed and/or open by appointment or only during limited hours.**
- C. **A historical marker or other suitable sign conveying pertinent information shall be on the site.**

- D. The site shall be within one mile of the turn-off from the state highway system in urban areas and within three miles in rural areas.
- E. The Maryland History sign with the seal and with no more than two additional words indicating the nature of the site is to be used in advance of the turn-off from the state highway system.
- F. All necessary follow-up signing on local streets shall be placed at no cost to the State Highway Administration.
- G. The providing of these signs is not affected by whether or not the site is publicly or privately owned, only that it is authenticated by proper authority.

Standard:

07f When points of interest guide signs are used on expressways and freeways, only one supplemental sign shall be used per interchange and no supplemental signs shall be used at freeway-to-freeway interchanges. The minimum spacing between the points of interest guide signs shall not be less than 800 feet.

When used, points of interest guide signs shall be as follows:

- A. Not more than one supplemental sign shall be used per generator per direction.
- B. Generator supplemental signs are to be placed in advance of the interchange that provides the most direct and the best route to the facility.
- C. Generator supplemental signs are to be placed along the freeway that is closest to the facility.
- D. Signing for a generator that is open part of the year is to be placed on a temporary supplemental sign, placed and removed as needed.
- E. Sign size, color, legend, and location shall be as required by State Highway Administration specifications.

07g The traffic generator must meet minimum size criteria and lie within maximum distance from interchange is shown in Table 2K-1.

Guidance:

07h *When points of interest guide signs used on expressways and freeways, no more than two destinations should be used per supplemental sign.*

07i *If more than two generators meet traffic generation criteria (Table 2K-1), only the two that exceed the use criteria by the greatest percentage should be shown. If two permanent generators are shown, then temporary supplemental signs should not be used. Permanent and temporary supplemental signs should use the same posts.*

07j *Supplemental signs should be placed on the ramps on non-directional interchanges.*

Option:

07k When points of interest guide signs are used on expressways and freeways in rural areas where interchange spacing is greater, two supplemental signs may be considered.

07l The following types of generators may be considered for signing on freeways and expressways provided the traffic generation criteria noted in the Table 2K-1 are met.

- A. Airports with regularly scheduled commercial flights.
- B. Educational institutions offering post high school education.
- C. Military facilities housing or employing large numbers of people.
- E. Historical, recreational, or cultural facilities open to the general public.
- F. Transportation facilities.

Standard:

07m When points of interest guide signs are used on conventional highways, only one supplemental sign shall be used per intersection per direction and two destinations shall be used per supplemental sign.

When used, points of interest guide signs shall be as follows:

- A. Not more than one supplemental sign shall be used per generator per direction.
- B. Generator supplemental signs are to be placed in advance of intersecting highway that provides the most direct and best route to the facility.
- C. Generator supplemental sign placed along the highway closest to the facility.
- D. Signing for a generator that is open part of the year to be placed on a temporary supplemental sign, placed and removed as needed.
- E. Sign size, color, legend, and location shall be as required by State Highway Administration specifications.

F. The distance of the generator to the highway being signed shall not exceed two miles in urban areas and five miles in rural areas. If more than two generators meet traffic generation criteria (Table 2K-2 and 2K-3), the two that exceed the use criteria by the greatest percentage shall be shown. If two permanent generators are shown, then temporary supplemental signs shall not be used. Permanent and temporary supplemental signs shall use the same posts.

07n The traffic generator must meet minimum size criteria and lie within maximum distance from interchange as shown in Table 2K-2 and 2K-3.

Option:

07o The following types of generators may be considered for signing along conventional highways:

- A. Airports that offer public transportation
- B. Educational institutions that offer post high school education
- C. Correctional institutions
- D. Health care facilities
- E. Historical, recreational, cultural facilities
- F. Miscellaneous government facilities housing local, state or federal agencies.

Table 2K-1a Traffic Generation Criteria - Expressways and Freeways

Generator	Criteria	Population of Area		
		1,000,000+	100,000-1,000,000	Less than 100,000
Airports	Number of scheduled one-way movements	60	40	20
	Mileage	5	5	10
Educational Institutions, Colleges & Universities	Equivalent full-time enrollment	4,000	2,500	1,500
	Mileage	3	5	10
Military Facilities	Employees or personnel	5,000	5,000	5,000
	Mileage	2	3	5
Miscellaneous Government Facilities	Employees	2,000	2,000	2,000
	Mileage	2	3	5
Historical Recreational or Cultural	Annual Attendance	300,000	150,000	50,000
	Mileage	Less than 5	Less than 7	Less than 10
Transportation Facilities	Agency	MDOT approved facilities		
	Mileage	Within 2 miles of interchange		

Table 2K-1a Traffic Generation Criteria - Conventional Highways

Generator	Criteria	Examples
Transportation Facilities	Airports	Those having public air service
	Railroad Stations	Those providing passenger service
	Mass Transit	Stations of the Baltimore and Washington systems
	Ferries	
Educational Institutions	Post high school having minimum of 1,000 full-time or part-time students	Colleges - 4 year, 2 year, Junior, Community Schools, Seminars
Correction Institutions	Government Operated	Correction Centers Youth Camps
Health Care Facilities	Any hospital or mental health care facility licensed by the State	Veterans Hospitals Mental Care Facilities State Hospitals Development Centers
Miscellaneous	Any building complex owned and operated or specifically for a local, state, or federal government agency housing 200 employees or assigned personnel.	State Offices County Offices City Offices Military Bases Federal Offices
	State agencies with a minimum 10,000 public transactions per year.	MVA Offices Parks and Wildlife Offices

Table 2K-1c Traffic Generation Criteria - Conventional Highways

Generator	Criteria	Population of Area		
		1,000,000+	100,000-1,000,000	Less than 100,000
Airports	Number of scheduled one-way movements	60	40	20
	Mileage	5	5	10
Historical, Recreational, or Cultural	Attendance	150,000	75,000	35,000
	Mileage	Less than 2	Less than 5	Less than 10

Section 2K.02 Design**Standard:**

- 01 **Tourist-oriented directional signs shall have one or more sign panels for the purpose of displaying the business identification of and directional information for eligible facilities. Each sign panel shall be rectangular in shape and shall have a white legend and border on a blue background.**
- 02 **The content of the legend on each sign panel shall be limited to the identification and directional information for no more than one eligible business, service, or activity facility. The legends shall not include promotional advertising.**

Guidance:

- 03 *Each sign panel should have a maximum of two lines of legend including no more than one symbol, a separate directional arrow, and the distance to the facility displayed beneath the arrow. Arrows pointing to the left or up should be at the extreme left of the sign panel. Arrows pointing to the right should be at the extreme right of the sign panel. Symbols, when used, should be to the left of the word legend or logo sign panel (see Paragraph 7).*

Option:

04 The General Service sign symbols (see Section 2I.02) and the symbols for recreational and cultural interest
area signs (see Chapter 2M) may be used.

05 Logo sign panels (see Section 2J.03) for specific businesses, services, and activities may also be used.
Based on engineering judgment, the hours of operation may be displayed on the sign panels.

Standard:

06 **When used, symbols and logo sign panels shall be an appropriate size (see Section 2K.04). Logos
resembling official traffic control devices shall not be permitted.**

Option:

07 The tourist-oriented directional sign may display the word message TOURIST ACTIVITIES at the top of
the sign.

Standard:

08 **The TOURIST ACTIVITIES word message shall have a white legend in all upper-case letters and a
white border on a blue background. If used, it shall be placed above and in addition to the directional
sign panels.**

Support:

09 Examples of tourist-oriented directional signs are shown in Figures 2K-1 and 2K-2.

Figure 2K-1. Examples of Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs

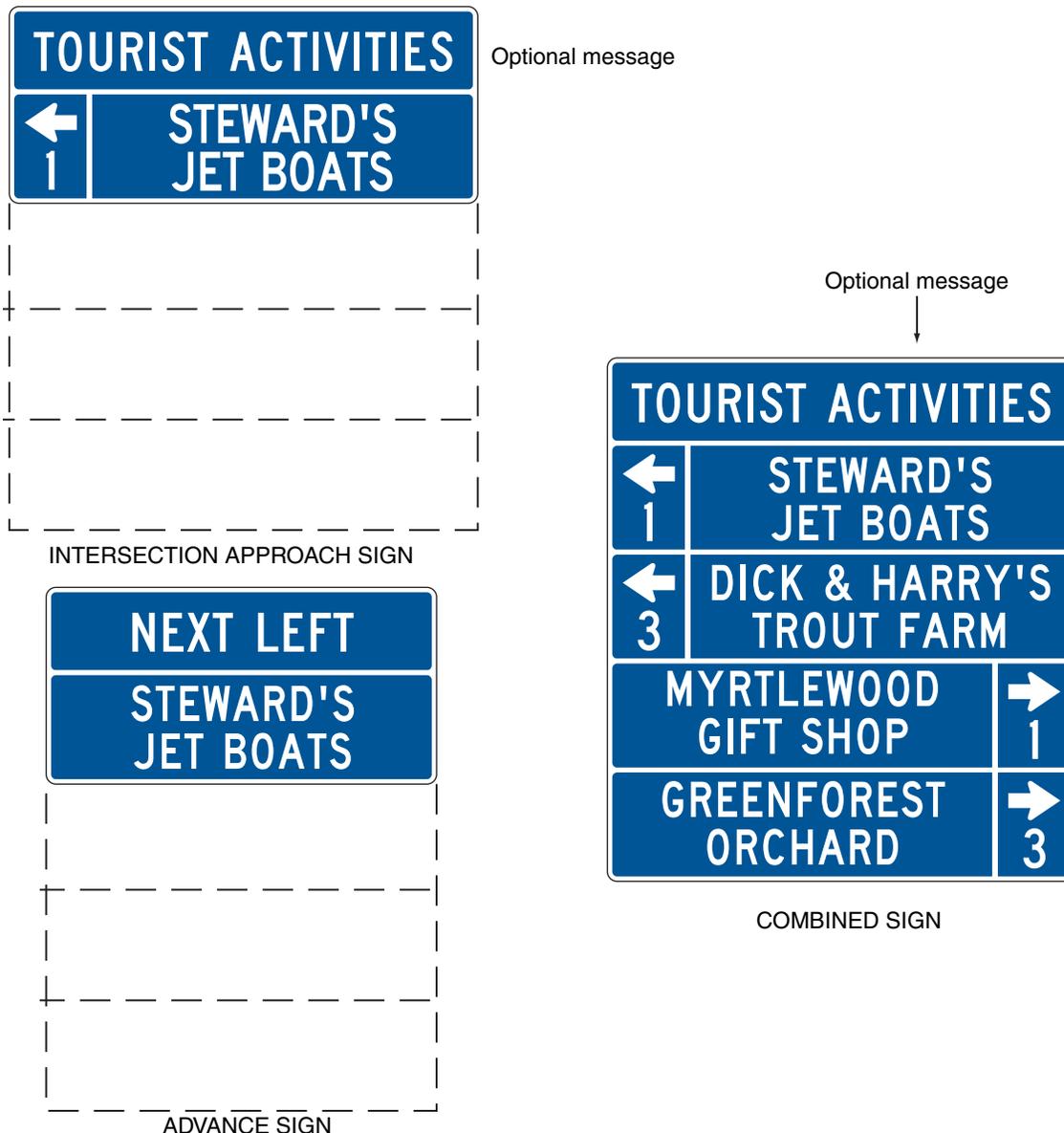
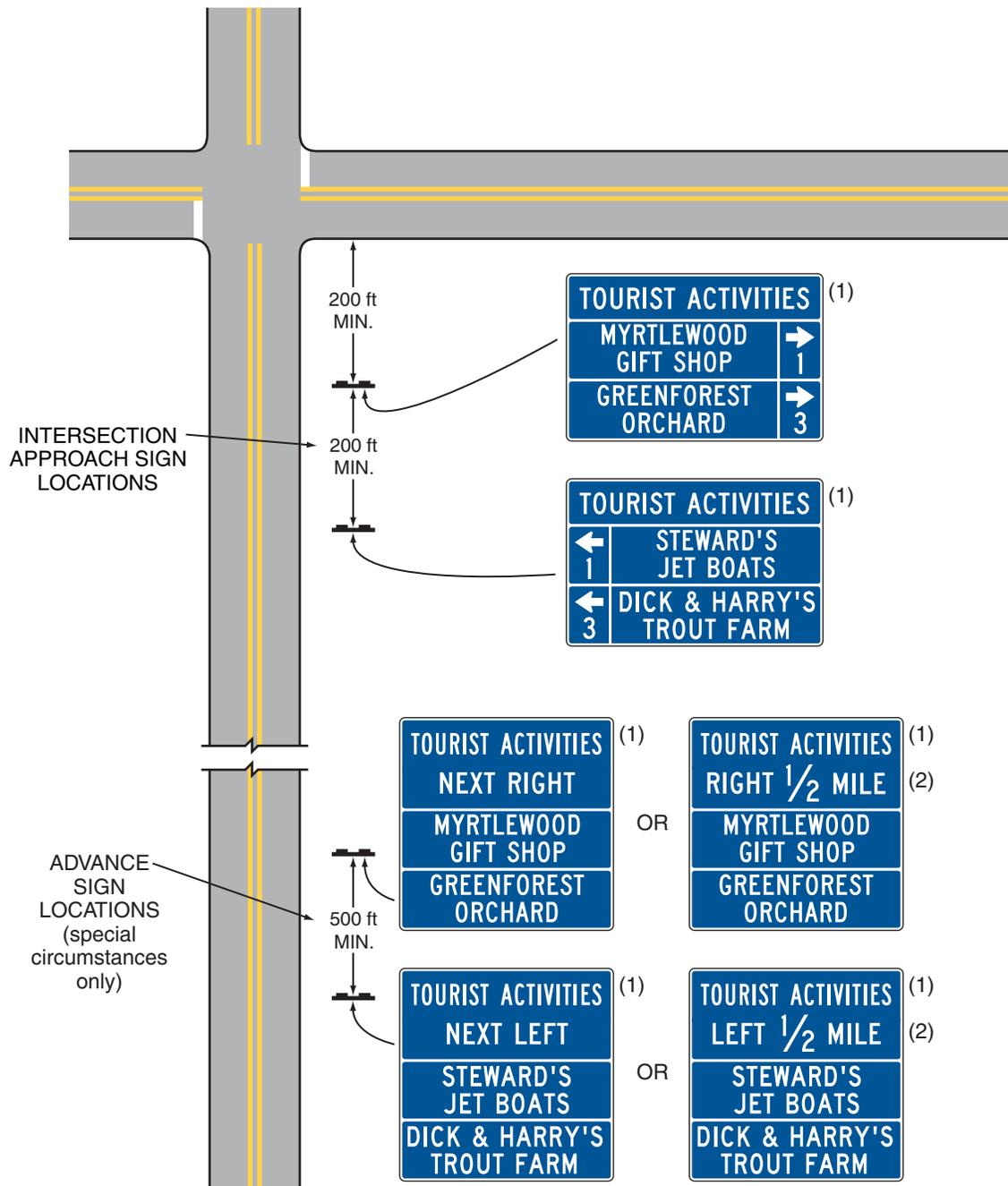


Figure 2K-2. Examples of Intersection Approach Signs and Advance Signs for Tourist-Oriented Directional Signs



(1) Optional message

(2) Use if there is an intervening intersection

Section 2K.03 Style and Size of Lettering

Guidance:

- 01 *All letters and numbers on tourist-oriented directional signs, except on the logos sign panels, should be upper-case and at least 6 inches in height. Any legend on a logo should be proportional to the size of the logo.*

Standard:

- 02 **Design standards for letters, numerals, and spacing shall be as provided in the “Standard Highway Signs and Markings” book (see Section 1A.11).**

Section 2K.04 Arrangement and Size of Signs

Standard:

- 01 **The size of a tourist-oriented directional sign shall be limited to a maximum height of 6 feet. Additional height shall be allowed to accommodate the addition of the optional TOURIST ACTIVITIES message provided in Section 2K.02 and the action messages provided in Section 2K.05.**

Guidance:

- 02 *The number of intersection approach signs (one sign for tourist-oriented destinations to the left, one for destinations to the right, and one for destinations straight ahead) installed in advance of an intersection should not exceed three. The number of sign panels installed on each sign should not exceed four. The sign panels for right-turn, left-turn, and straight-through destinations should be on separate signs. The left-turn destination sign should be located farthest from the intersection, then the right-turn destination sign, with the straight-through destination sign located closest to the intersection (see Figure 2K-2). Signs for facilities in the straight-through direction should be considered only when there are signs for destinations in either the left or right direction.*

- 03 *If it has been determined to be appropriate to combine the left-turn and right-turn destination sign panels on a single sign, the left-turn destination sign panels should be above the right-turn destination sign panels (see Figure 2K-1). When there are multiple destinations in the same direction, they should be in order based on their distance from the intersection. Except as provided in Paragraph 5, a straight-through sign panel should not be combined with a sign displaying left- and/or right-turn destinations.*

- 04 *The sign panels should not exceed the size necessary to accommodate two lines of legend without crowding. Symbols and logo sign panels on a directional sign panel should not exceed the height of two lines of a word legend. All directional sign panels and other parts of the sign should be the same width, which should not exceed 6 feet.*

Option:

- 05 *At intersection approaches where three or fewer facilities are displayed, the left-turn, right-turn, and straight-through destination sign panels may be combined on the same sign.*

Section 2K.05 Advance Signs

Guidance:

- 01 *Advance signs should be limited to those situations where sight distance, intersection vehicle maneuvers, or other vehicle operating characteristics require advance notification of the destinations and their directions.*

- 02 *The design of the advance sign should be identical to the design of the intersection approach sign. However, the directional arrows and distances to the destinations should be omitted, and the action messages NEXT RIGHT, NEXT LEFT, or AHEAD should be placed on the sign above the business identification sign panels. The action messages should have the same letter height as the other word messages on the directional sign panels (see Figures 2K-1 and 2K-2).*

Standard:

- 03 **The action message sign panels shall have a white legend in all upper-case letters and a white border on a blue background.**

Option:

- 04 *The legend RIGHT 1/2 MILE or LEFT 1/2 MILE may be used on advance signs when there are intervening minor roads.*

- 05 *The height required to add the directional word messages recommended for the advance sign may be added to the maximum sign height of 6 feet.*

Guidance:

- 06 *The optional TOURIST ACTIVITIES message, when used on an advance sign, and the action message should be combined on a single sign panel with TOURIST ACTIVITIES as the top line and the action message as the bottom line (see Figure 2K-2).*

Section 2K.06 Sign Locations

Guidance:

- 01 *If used, the intersection approach signs should be located at least 200 feet in advance of the intersection. Signs should be spaced at least 200 feet apart and at least 200 feet from other traffic control devices.*

02 *If used, advance signs should be located approximately 1/2 mile from the intersection with 500 feet between these signs. In the direction of travel, the order of advance sign placement should be to show the destinations to the left first, then destinations to the right, and last, the destinations straight ahead.*

03 *Position, height, and lateral offset of signs should be governed by Chapter 2A except as permitted in this Section.*

Option:

04 Tourist-oriented directional signs may be placed farther from the edge of the road than other traffic control signs.

Standard:

05 **The location of other traffic control devices shall take precedence over the location of tourist-oriented directional signs.**

Section 2K.07 Local Policy

Standard:

01 **To be eligible for tourist-oriented directional signing, facilities shall comply with applicable State and Federal laws concerning the provisions of public accommodations without regard to race, religion, color, age, sex, or national origin, and with laws concerning the licensing and approval of service facilities. Each State that elects to use tourist-oriented directional signs shall adopt a policy that complies with these provisions.**

Guidance:

02 *The **Local** policy should include:*

- A. *A definition of tourist-oriented business, service, and activity facilities.*
- B. *Eligibility criteria for signs for facilities.*
- C. *Provision for incorporating Specific Service signs into the tourist-oriented directional signs as required by Paragraph 5 of Section 2K.01.*
- D. *Provision for covering signs during off seasons for facilities operated on a seasonal basis.*
- E. *Provisions for signs to facilities that are not located on the crossroad when such facilities are eligible for signs.*
- F. *A definition of the immediate area in compliance with the provisions of Paragraph 2 of Section 2K.01.*
- G. *Maximum distances to eligible facilities. The maximum distance should be 5 miles.*
- H. *Provision for information centers (plazas) when the number of eligible sign applicants exceeds the maximum permissible number of sign panel installations.*
- I. *Provision for limiting the number of signs when there are more applicants than the maximum number of signs permitted.*
- J. *Criteria for use at intersections on expressways.*
- K. *Provisions for controlling or excluding those businesses which have illegal signs as defined by the Highway Beautification Act of 1965 (23 U.S.C. 131).*
- L. *Provisions for States to charge fees to cover the cost of signs through a permit system.*
- M. *A definition of the conditions under which the time of operation is displayed.*
- N. *Provisions for determining if advance signs will be permitted, and the circumstances under which they will be installed.*

02a *Recognizing the need to safely guide Maryland citizens and visitors to a myriad of points of cultural, historic and recreational interest and the economic benefits to the state in accomplishing this in an effective manner, and further recognizing that it is not possible to do this relying solely on signing due to several significant human factors and the lack of space along the highway system to place such signs, a list of effective alternate ways to disburse travel information has been developed. The noted alternatives can usually provide for more useful information and are an effective compliment to highway signing.*

- A. *Scenic highway maps*
- B. *Truckers maps*
- C. *Rest area/information centers*
- D. *Kiosk in communities*
- E. *Travelers advisory radio*
- F. *Brochures, descriptive materials, maps*
- G. *Street name sign program*
- H. *Public relations/information efforts*
- I. *ITS technology*