National Committee on
Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item Number: 26B-GMI-01

NCUTCD PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO THE MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE:	Guide and Motorist Information Signs Technical Committee
ITEM NUMBER:	26B-GMI-01
TOPIC:	Number of Allowable Supplemental Destinations
ORIGIN OF REQUEST:	Guide and Motorist Information Signs TC
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD:	2E.51

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:
Approved by GMI TC: 06/25/2026
Approved by NCUTCD Council: .....

This is a proposed change to the MUTCD that has been developed by a technical committee, joint committee, or joint task force of the NCUTCD. The NCUTCD is distributing this to its sponsoring organizations for review and comment. Sponsor comments will be considered in revising the proposal prior to NCUTCD Council consideration. This proposal does not represent a revision of the MUTCD and does not constitute official MUTCD standards, guidance, options, or support. If approved by the NCUTCD Council, the recommended changes will be submitted to FHWA for consideration for inclusion in a future MUTCD revision. The MUTCD can be revised only through the federal rulemaking process.

SUMMARY:
Paragraphs 4, 5 and 8 of Section 2E.51 appear to provide conflicting content about the number of allowable supplemental destinations at an interchange. This proposal provides additional information to make the actual intent clear.

DISCUSSION:
In Section 2E.51 (Supplemental Guide Signs), paragraphs 4 and 5 say:

No more than one Supplemental guide sign should be used on each interchange approach. A Supplemental guide sign should display no more than two destinations and no more than three lines of destination names.

But the Standard statement in paragraph 8 says:

No more than two supplemental traffic generator destinations shall be signed from a single interchange approach and four from a single interchange along the main roadway.

It then refers back to paragraphs 4 and 5 for additional clarity, but that results in a circular path of trying to understand why, if no more than two supplemental destinations are allowed (standard), then how can you possibly have more than two destinations on one sign?

The answer seems to lie in the undefined nuance of a “destination” (used in paragraph 5) and a “supplemental traffic generator destination” (used in paragraph 8). The two terms may seem synonymous since this section provides no basis for distinguishing between them. The intent is

understood that a "traffic generator destination," as explained in the *AASHTO Guidelines for the Selection of Supplemental Guide Signs for Traffic Generators Adjacent to Freeways* (cross referenced in paragraph 1), is one that would not otherwise be allowed on the standard interchange signing such as a college or university, military base, arena, auditorium, convention hall, stadium, state or national park, state or national monument, major recreational area, airport, or other traffic generator destination eligible for Supplemental guide signs as defined by the jurisdictional state or agency policy. The word "destination" alone implies all supplemental destinations, including traffic generator destinations as well as cities or street names that could have been placed on the standard interchange signing but higher priority destinations were chosen instead.

This proposal addresses the specific nature of what is being standardized in paragraph 8 without trying to set an official definition of terms. Also, this proposal introduces some minor editorial changes.

RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:

The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double underline for additions and ~~green double strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases, background comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated by [bracketed white text in shaded green]. Deletions made by a technical committee, joint committee, or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in ~~highlighted red strikethrough and sans-serif text~~. Additions made by a technical committee, joint committee, or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in underline blue and sans-serif text.

PART 2
SIGNS

CHAPTER 2E. GUIDE SIGNS—FREEWAYS AND EXPRESSWAYS

Section 2E.51 Supplemental Guide Signs (E3 Series)

Support:

01 Supplemental guide signs (see Figure 2E-53) can be used to provide information regarding destinations accessible from an interchange, other than places displayed on the standard interchange signing. However, such Supplemental guide signing can reduce the effectiveness of other more important guide signing because of the possibility of overloading the road user's capacity to receive visual messages and make appropriate decisions. "The AASHTO Guidelines for the Selection of Supplemental Guide Signs for Traffic Generators Adjacent to Freeways" is incorporated by reference in this Section and includes information regarding traffic generator destinations, separate from standard interchange signing destinations. Standard interchange signing destinations include, but are not limited to, cities and intersecting routes/streets on Advance guide signs and Exit direction signs. Traffic generator destinations include colleges, universities, military bases, arenas, auditoriums, convention halls, stadiums, state parks, national parks, state monuments, national monuments, major recreational areas, airports, or other traffic generator destinations eligible for Supplemental guide signs as defined by the jurisdictional state or agency policy.

Guidance:

02 Use of Supplemental guide signs should be limited to situations where there is a demonstrated need to sign for more destinations from an interchange than those that are displayed on the Interchange Advance guide and Exit Direction signs.

03 ~~A Supplemental guide sign should not be installed unless a destination meets the criteria established by the State or agency policy~~. [Relocated to end of paragraph] States and other agencies should adopt an appropriate policy for installing Supplemental guide signs using the "AASHTO Guidelines for the Selection of Supplemental Guide Signs for Traffic Generators Adjacent to Freeways." In developing policies for such signing, such items as

population, amount of traffic generated, distance from the route, and the significance of the destination, should be taken into account. A Supplemental guide sign should not be installed unless a destination meets the criteria established by the State or agency policy. [Relocated from beginning of the paragraph so as to first establish that a policy should be created before stating that criteria within the policy should be met.]

04 No more than one Supplemental guide sign should be used on each interchange approach.

05 A Supplemental guide sign should display no more than two destinations and no more than three lines of destination names. Destination names should be followed by the interchange number (and suffix), or if interchanges are not numbered, by the legend NEXT RIGHT or SECOND RIGHT or both, as appropriate. ~~The Supplemental guide sign should be installed as an independent guide sign assembly~~. [This sentence is not needed because the information is included in Standard paragraph 09 and related to Guidance paragraph 07.]

06 Where two or more Interchange Advance guide signs are used, the Supplemental guide sign should be installed approximately midway between two of the Interchange Advance guide signs. If only one Interchange Advance guide sign is used, the Supplemental guide sign should follow it by at least 800 feet. ~~If the interchanges are numbered, the interchange number should be used for the action message.~~ [This sentence is unnecessary as it already covered in paragraph 05, and it may be confused as prescribing the smaller text size for action messages in Table 2E-5 Minimum Letter and Numeral Sizes for Freeway Guide Signs According to Sign Type.]

07 A Supplemental guide sign should not be installed ~~in the same location with or~~ where it will detract from interchange guide signs ~~for a different interchange~~. [This sentence is rewritten to improve clarity and consistency as it relates to Paragraph 06.]

Standard:

08 No more than two ~~supplemental~~ traffic generator-destinations shall be signed from a single interchange approach ~~and four from a single interchange along the main roadway~~ (see Paragraphs 4 and 5 of this Section regarding the number of Supplemental guide signs at an interchange and the number of destinations displayed on a Supplemental guide sign). [The word “supplemental” adds no value or clarity. The last part of the sentence is unnecessary because it only sums the two allowable traffic generator destinations per approach to get a sum of four for the main roadway. Additionally, it refers you to Paragraph 4, which only mentions “interchange approach” and not the entire interchange.]

09 Supplemental guide signs shall not be placed at the same location as Interchange Advance guide, Exit Direction, or other signs related to an exit or interchange.

10 Guide signs for park-and-ride facilities shall be considered as Supplemental guide signs (see Figure 2E-54).

11 Guide signs for recreational or cultural interest destinations (see Chapter 2M) shall be considered as Supplemental guide signs, except where the interchange provides direct access to such a destination and the destination is instead displayed on the Interchange Advance guide and Exit Direction signs.

Option:

12 The pictograph of a transit provider (see definition in Section 1C.02) may be displayed on the Park – Ride Supplemental guide sign or on a Supplemental guide sign for a transit facility.

Guidance:

13 The use of a transit pictograph and/or the carpool symbol on the PARK – RIDE Supplemental guide sign should comply with the provisions of Paragraph 5 of Section 2D.48.

Standard:

14 When a transit pictograph is displayed on the PARK – RIDE Supplemental guide sign, it shall be located on the same line as the carpool symbol, if used, above the word legend.

15 The maximum dimension (height or width) of a pictograph on a sign shall not exceed two times the upper-case letter height of the destination or PARK – RIDE legend.