



Title:
SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING POLICY

Subject:
GENERAL OPERATIONS

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Policy Number:
04.70.00

Category:
DISTRICTWIDE POLICY

Approval Date:
04/15/2016

Last Revised Date:
06/13/2018

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County (*the "District"*) completed the *Signage Master Plan* and *Sign Manual and Standards* in November 2015. This policy is intended to guide the District on future signage decisions and to put a good faith effort to align its projects and plans with the *Signage Master Plan* and *Sign Manual and Standards*.

PURPOSE:

Although the District currently has some signage standards, they are in several documents of different vintages and most were never officially adopted. This policy will create consistency for signage as a primary focus and also memorialize current policies and procedures. Wayfinding could also benefit from consistent standards in the District. Current wayfinding consists of entrance and preserve signs along roadways, grove maps in picnic area, and confidence markers along trails.

In addition to creating standards, another overall goal of the plan is to reduce the number of signs and update negative messaging on signs while ensuring visitor safety and that rules are followed. The District has a long history and a variety of signage has been installed over the years. Creating consistent signage will enhance the District brand and help visitors orient themselves more quickly.

AFFECTED AREAS:

This policy applies to all District signage including permanent, temporary, partner and special event signs.

DEFINITIONS:

Signage: Signage is physical infrastructure usually with a visual graphic and words that provides information (*e.g. parking lot grove/site map*).

Wayfinding: Wayfinding encompasses all of the ways in which people orient themselves in physical space and navigate from place to place (*e.g. trail maps*).

Sign Placement & Zone Concept: A typical grove zone map identifies where signs are to be located within a typical grove or preserve. These guidelines must be followed throughout the District to insure an orderly and uniform placement.

Identification Zone: This zone is defined as those areas along roads and property lines that are typically experienced from a vehicle. The purpose of signs in this zone is for visitors to identify District property.

Entry Zone: This zone is defined as those areas along the entry drive before the first parking stall and is also typically experienced from a vehicle. The purpose of the signs is to provide the specific name of the grove or preserve and to welcome visitors. Placement of sign standards should be organized as not to detract the driver's attention and create a hazardous condition.

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Orientation Zone: This zone is defined as the area along the parking lot and is typically experienced by pedestrians. The signs in this zone should be concentrated in information nodes, located in the most accessible and visible point in the preserve. The node should communicate opportunities within the preserve via maps and international symbols. This node should also include other information such as rules, regulations, special events and telephone numbers for emergencies and more information.

Trail Signs: Signs along trails are typically read by a pedestrian or from a bicycle to assist with wayfinding. These signs in this zone will regulate pedestrian/ bicycle use to provide trail information including start of the trail, trail mile markers and directions/information about other destinations available from the trail.

Special Area Signs: This category of signs for restoration projects, recreation areas and other unique sites are intended to convey information about regulatory messages, educational or interpretative messages, partner recognition, grant recognition and other temporary signs relating to programs or events. Many ponds and lakes signage are considered special recreation or restoration areas.

Buildings and Facilities Signs: There are a variety of buildings throughout the District including both public and non-public facilities. Signage should be clear for each building type and ensure the visitors understand the regulations associated with the building but using hospitable language to ensure visitors feel welcome.

PROCEDURE/PROCESS:

- 1) **Sign Request Form:** The Sign Request Form will be the primary mechanism for posting new signs:
 - The Sign Request Form is available from the Communications Department and is posted on the District SharePoint “Intranet”;
 - All Sign Request Forms must be submitted to the Sign Review Committee via the fpccsigns@cookcountyil.gov email; and,
 - All approved signs will be submitted to Net Facilities for fabrication by the Communications Department.

2) **Sign Review Committee:**

- a. **Composition:** The Sign Review Committee is comprised of staff members from the Planning and Development Dept. and the Office of the General Supt.
- b. **Reporting Structure:** The Sign Review Committee shall report directly to the General Superintendent and/or his/her designee.
- c. **Committee Process:**

Step 1: The Committee receives sign requests and subsequent request application materials.

Step 2: The Committee reviews the request, in consultation with the applicant if necessary.

Step 3: The Committee shall make a decision based on a majority vote of committee members.

Step 4: If the item is not approved, the Committee will notify the applicant within two (2) business days.

Step 5: Denied applicants can appeal to the General Superintendent for reconsideration.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Sign Review Committee: The Sign Review Committee is an internal multi-departmental group that reviews sign requests for approval and makes recommendations to the General Superintendent as needed. The Committee meets monthly or more often as requests dictate.

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Department of Planning & Development: The Department of Planning & Development shall share the management of the implementation of this policy.

Communications Department: The Communications Department shall share the management of the implementation of this policy.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Training will be offered to all departments on the Sign Manual and Standards, Sign Master Plan, Sign Policy and Sign Request form. Related training materials will be posted on a shared computer drive and can be accessed as needed.

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

- 1) This policy should be distributed to all relevant/necessary staff.
- 2) This policy should be added to the District shared drive, website, and intranet.

REFERENCES:

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Signs & Billboards (FPDCC Code Section [2-3-6](#))

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Violation of Posted Signs (FPDCC Code Section [4-2-3](#))

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Signs Posted (FPDCC Code Section [3-2-2](#))

POLICY LEAD: Anthony D. Tindall
Policy & Special Projects Manager

APPROVAL: Arnold Randall
General Superintendent

POLICY HISTORY:

Approved: 04/15/2016

Revised: 06/13/2018

Revised:

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions concerning District policies, please contact:

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