



Sign System Recommendations

Client/Project		Project No.
The College of New Jersey Exterior Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan		09212000
Date	Revisions	Scale
04.27.10	06.13.11	N/A



Sign Types

Recommended sign types required for a complete wayfinding system on the TCNJ campus are described below. Detailed sign messages and their typical locations are included in the matrix of sign types in this report.

HIGHWAY SIGNS

Guide Signs

Guide signs, as defined by the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices 2009, are “essential to direct road users along streets and highways, to inform them of intersecting routes, to direct them to cities, towns, villages, or other important destinations...and generally to give such information as will help them along their way in the most simple, direct manner possible.” These should be used on highways to indicate the appropriate exit for the campus.

If the signs on I-95 cannot be changed, then a panel or medallion with the college logo should be attached to one leg of the existing signs. If this proves impossible, then consider joining the Adopt A Highway program for the stretches adjacent to exit 4, so the college's logo is on the highway as a sponsor.

APPROACH ROADS

Trailblazers

Trailblazers are directional signs that lead to a single destination such as a campus or a major destination within a campus. They may also indicate the distance to the destination.

- 1. On the off-ramps from I-95, there is a need for a directional sign or trailblazer indicating to motorists which direction they should take on Route 31 to reach the college.
- 2. Once on Route 31, there should be additional trailblazers with the college logo, directional arrow and a distance indication to direct and reassure motorists that they are heading in the right direction and to state the remaining distance to the college.

- 3. College trailblazers should also be provided on Route 31 coming from the south and on Green Lane coming from the east.
- 4. Trailblazers leading motorists back to I-95 should be on route 31 as well as the Green Lane and Pennington Road entrances/exits.

IDENTIFICATION SIGNS

Identification signs for the Green Lane practice fields should be provided, identifying them as part of the college.

Gateways

Gateways are architecture and/or landscape signs that mark significant entrances to the college. They also convey the college's identity, stature and permanence. At TCNJ, the main gateway should serve as a cue from a distance, providing approaching motorists and pedestrians a visual marker to head towards.

1. Main Gateway

The existing Route 31/ Pennington Road gateway to the campus is marked by a large brick sign. Lettering is placed inside the curve of the sign. The lettering cannot be seen from the road perpendicular to the entry drive until very close to the turn. If a car is in the drive, the lettering might be blocked as well. The low, plain sign does little to celebrate the TCNJ entry. Recommendations include:

- A TCNJ identifier (name or logo) should be placed on the portion of the gateway facing approaching traffic.
- Vertical element(s), such as banners, flags, trees or other structures, should be added to mark the gateway.
- The area should be well-landscaped (i.e. hedges, flower beds, etc.) to welcome visitors and the TCNJ community to campus.
 - All visitor traffic entering from Route 31 will be directed to turn right. Directional signage on the entrance road should indicate: parking, information and admissions.

- On all materials, this should be identified as the “Main Entrance.”

2. Green Lane Gateway

The current Green Lane gateway is unannounced. This secondary gate, used primarily by students, faculty and local visitors, is recommended as a secondary egress during heavily trafficked events. This gateway should be signed, but visitors unfamiliar with the campus should be directed to the main entrance.

- All visitor traffic entering from Green Lane should be directed to turn left. Left directional signage at the entry should indicate: parking, information and admissions.

ON-CAMPUS

Vehicular Signs

Vehicular Directional Signs

Immediate access to information will help orient visitors. This could be accomplished by providing information pull-offs on Metzger Loop. A pull-off would provide a map of the campus and directions regarding parking permits, parking locations, admissions and event venues.

Motorists will encounter a hierarchy of signage along Metzger Loop. Street signs, parking identification and directional signs will guide and orient visitors and newcomers to the campus. Interior to the campus, signs should direct drivers to visitor parking, information, admissions, campus police (an alternative parking permit location) and back to Metzger Loop.

Vehicular directional signs have limited space; messages must be limited in number to be readable by drivers. Additional identification or branding elements should be minimized to avoid information overload. Internal vehicular directional signs should accommodate a maximum of three single-line messages according to the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD 2009).

Client/Project The College of New Jersey Exterior Signage and Wayfinding Master Plan		Project No. 09212000
Date 04.27.10	Revisions 06.13.11	Scale N/A



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There will also be designated locations where college staff can place temporary signs for special events. Format and size of signs will be standardized to ensure clear presentation of information.

Emergency Services Signs

Along Metzger Loop, distinctive markers at emergency access roadways should signal first responders.

Street Signs

Street names are important wayfinding elements on most campuses. They not only identify paths but also provide names of intersections that serve as intermediate campus destinations. Having street names aids in giving directions to those new to campus.

- 1. Metzger Loop should be identified with post-mounted street signs at entries and exits to visitor parking lots.
- 2. Two other streets that access multiple internal destinations could be named. Since they access only a couple locations, a directional sign at their intersection with Metzger Loop would be effective and reduce the sign count.

Parking

A lack of informative and visible signs was identified as a major difficulty for visitors. The campus needs a set of parking signs at parking entrances.

Parking Lot Identification

For visitor ease and comfort, it is important that parking lots and structures be identified in a predictable pattern. At present, parking lots are identified by number and sometimes by name. The number is the formal identifier but is not sequential for a motorist driving Metzger Loop.

From the main entrance, if all visitor traffic is directed to the right from the main entrance, it would help to have parking lots numbered sequentially as the motorist experiences them. In doing so, it is recommended that sequential numbering starts with the Armstrong lot. Existing parking lots 14 and 15 may be lost to the Campus Town development but should be included in the present sequence. If they go away, the resulting gap would not be a problem. It is also recommended that names such as 2a be avoided. If parking lots adjacent to facilities were also named for the facility, then the additional information about the lot's relationship to campus is beneficial. Consistent reference terms are needed.

Parking lot entrances require easily visible and legible signs that identify the lot by number and name as well as any parking restrictions. These may include: hours of operation, who may park there, when they may park there and any exceptions. Permit symbols or colors should be indicated on these signs to make the parking process as transparent as possible. Where visitor parking is available a list of nearby destinations is desirable.

Lot use changes should be displayed by a changeable message sign, such as a fold down sign.

For special events, such as the Special Olympics, summer camps, etc., temporary signs are used to direct motorists. At present, these lawn signs are too small and poorly placed to be of consistent use to drivers. Development of standard locations and mountings for these signs is recommended. They could be mounted as part of the new vehicular directional sign system or separately.

Parking Regulatory Signs

Parking permit signs should be used within larger lots or structures that accommodate multiple parking types within a single facility. They are used to identify groups of parking spots with similar permit designations.

When lots that have streets passing through them, parking permit signs should be used to line the edge of the street; this will mark the street boundary and separate it from parking areas.

Parking Location Signs

Location markers are used within large parking lots to provide a system of identification for areas within the lot. This makes it easier for motorists to find their car, thereby reducing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. It also makes it easier to provide an accurate location to emergency services personnel should the need arise

Parking location signs can be combined with other parking signs on the same pole or structure to reduce fabrication and installation costs and to limit visual clutter.

PEDESTRIAN SIGNS

Pedestrian Directional Signs

The pedestrian directional signs at TCNJ should serve two primary purposes. The first is to direct college community members and visitors to their destination once they have left their car or bus. The second, given the homogeneous look of the campus, is to assist in defining major routes on campus, thus helping with its organization. Pedestrian directional signs can carry a variety of wayfinding information, including: important buildings and visitor parking facilities. Pedestrian directional signs should indicate their location information (address, adjacent building or area) and possibly carry maps or interpretive panels. On a campus with evening operations, these signs need illumination. Accessibility information needs to be included as appropriate.

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Pedestrian directional signs should be located at important intersections and along major paths where individuals emerge from buildings in need of information. They should also be placed at the pedestrian entrances/exits of parking facilities and at pedestrian entrances of campus. Campus maps may be used at some of these locations in place of directional signs.

In addition to providing orientation and direction, pedestrian directional signs can bring a human scale to the campus while echoing distinctive features of the college.

When building entrances are not handicap accessible, signs are needed to direct those with mobility impairments to accessible entrances. This information can often be integrated into campus maps or building ID signs.

Building Identification

Currently most TCNJ buildings have only one identification sign. It is typically ground-mounted away from the building and not clearly visible from pedestrian paths. Some major buildings, such as the New Library, have no identification sign. Only the small operating hours signs attached to the entrance doors identify the building.

- 1. There is no confirming identification on entrance doors to buildings.
- 2. On buildings such as Loser Hall with Georgian colonial porticos, the name of the building is not placed on the portico's façade. This is an ideal place to identify the building, as the eye is drawn there when one is approaching from a distance.
- 3. There is typically no identification of buildings at secondary entrances.
- 4. There is a lack of information about accessible entrances where they differ from main or high traffic entrances.

Visitors need buildings to be identified at their main entrances and at their accessible entrance (if different). Depending on budget and the college's needs, building identification may also be needed at active secondary building entrances.

Identification signs should contain, at the minimum, a building name and building code. They may also carry information about what is inside the building. Further discussion about messages for building identification signs is included in the policy section.

For buildings with limited access entrances (e.g., Kendall Hall) the building identification sign at a particular entrance should distinguish what can be accessed from the entrance.

For large facilities and those set back from the street or walkway, consider large ground-mounted identification signs near the street or walkway or dimensional letters on the building at the first floor level. If these are used, secondary building identification is needed at the entrance to confirm the identity of the facility.

Signs or cut letters high up on the building can be difficult for pedestrians to see when close up; this should be taken into account when designing building identification. For secondary entrances, small plaques or letters on glass doors or sidelights will be adequate. In all cases signs should be designed based on the scale of the building, configuration of the entrance, building setback and sight lines.

Transit Signs

Signs at transit stops and information about the route and frequency of service are important on the TCNJ campus. Stops must be visible from high-use pedestrian paths on campus and should indicate by logo and text the system and routes serving that stop. A strip map of the route and a schedule, or at least the frequency of service, should also be provided. Current technologies that provide automatic information bus arrival times would be a welcome amenity and should be requested from NJT.

Interpretive signs

Interpretive sign systems answer the desire to engage students and visitors and enhance the pedestrian experience and speak to the traditions that make each school unique.

Interpretive signs are a powerful way to share memories that are meaningful in the life of a school. Whether describing people, places, buildings or events, interpretive signs can highlight traditions and reflect the unique character of a campus. Storytelling is especially popular with first-time visitors and nostalgic alumni since both are eager to immerse themselves in the campus culture.

For example, an interpretive sign program might highlight TCNJ's history with significant episodes from its past—interesting people, timeline of events and campus milestones—through an interpretive storytelling program to be implemented as part of a signage master plan. Interpretation throughout the campus could display the distinguished legacy of the college.

Many subjects can form the basis of a fascinating interpretive program that reinforces the college's mission and promotional goals. Interpretation can take the form of panels, (whether freestanding or incorporated into pedestrian signs); it can also be woven into the campus fabric in a number of other ways.

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Technology can play a part in creating an interesting interpretive program for the TCNJ campus. Cell phone tours could include narration from famous figures, walking tours could utilize PDAs and visitors could download a variety of podcasts depending on their specific interests. These options all allow customization; so, for example, a prospective student’s tour would differ from that chosen by a visiting professional.

Banners

Banners can successfully identify an area and convey simple themes or messages. Unlike landscaping, which can take years to mature, banners are a quick way to visually enhance an area. One or more rows of banners provide a strong, repeating graphic element that can be used for both promotional and identity purposes. When executed with permanent materials (such as painted aluminum) they can also become a landmark that is useful for wayfinding. Fabric banners are changeable, allowing for seasonal, event-specific or thematic changes. They need to be legible to communicate their message. Banners that are designed simply, with readable type sizes and few words, are the most successful.

Banners should be placed at the edges of roadways or major pedestrian paths, within the viewer’s visual field but not where they would be distracting or would compete with directional or informational signage.

With the likely development of Campus Town near the main entrance to the college, it will become more important to distinguish when a visitor had entered the campus and what is campus versus commercial. Banners can play a significant role on the entrance road and on the Metzger Loop to do this.

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