

MEMORANDUM

To: Tourism Attraction Sign Participants
From: Cindi Manning Fleischli
Re: Tourism Attraction Sign Program

The Illinois Bureau of Tourism has been working with the Illinois Department of Transportation to implement the Tourism Attraction Signage Program for interstate highways throughout Illinois. These large blue signs will be much like those currently found along the interstates for Gas, Food, Lodging and Camping. Due to the cost of implementing these signs statewide, we will phase in the program over the next several years. When complete, these signs will provide all of us a powerful new way to promote attractions throughout our state.

We have revised the attached policy and application. Please be sure to throw away the old applications and policy and use the new. Each sign can accommodate six tourism attraction logos and each attraction **MUST** identify **ONE** intersection for the sign. The intersection closest to the attraction must also be identified through a computer mapping system, for example, Map Quest or Rand McNally, to verify the directions and the **Exit Number**. Attractions will not be allowed to request logos at more than one intersection therefore it is important for attractions to use the intersection closest to their facility.

Participating attractions will be charged a yearly fee for the signs in the same manner as IDOT's Business Logo Signing Program to cover their costs. The attractions will also be responsible for procuring and furnishing the individual logo panels to be placed on the large signs installed by IDOT. Not-for-Profit Corporations, State-owned attractions, such as historic sites, or state parks, will be exempted from the fee.

Final pricing is subject to the formal rulemaking process, but we anticipate that the fees will be the same as IDOT's current recommended fees for the Business Logo Signing Program. **This includes a \$100 application fee plus the following yearly fees:**

- **\$200 for each freeway sign**
- **\$130 for each ramp sign and**
- **\$30 for each trailblazer sign installed by IDOT**

Any necessary trailblazer signs on locally maintained roads or streets must be arranged for by the participating attractions. For example, the estimated cost for one sign in two directions Northbound and Southbound could range from \$650 to \$750 annually.

The process for this program will go as follows:

1. Application is sent to IBOT Sign Coordinator
2. IBOT reviews for completeness
3. IBOT notifies applicant of status via email only if the application is incomplete
4. Completed applications are scored
5. Incomplete applications will be given 30 days to provide necessary documentation, after the 30 days the applicant will need to re-submit their application for consideration
6. IBOT forwards completed applications to IDOT Central Office (IDOT CO)

7. IDOT CO will forward applications to the appropriate Highway District
8. IDOT Highway District (IDOT HD) will determine the availability of space for the requested intersection
9. IDOT HD will contact applicant via letter or email to request logo designs and the **\$100 non-refundable application fee** if the space is available at the requested intersection
10. Applicant sends application fee and draft logo to IDOT HD
11. IDOT HD determines if logo meets guidelines
12. IDOT HD notifies the applicant if the logo meets the guidelines – If the logo does not meet the guidelines the application cannot be considered and the applicant must make the necessary changes to continue – If the logo meets the guidelines IDOT HD will request the **final logo and the annual fee**
13. Applicant sends **the annual fee and the completed logo** to IDOT HD for installation on the blue sign
14. IDOT HD notifies IDOT Central Office and IBOT of the completed project
15. IBOT closes the application process

Since the program may take as long as three years to accomplish, applicants who have sent their applications to IBOT may be requested to update the application. If the applicant is no longer considering a sign, IBOT needs to be notified of the application withdraw via email or mail.

We regret that this program has taken so long to implement; however, please know that our offices are doing our best under the current funding constraints. If you have any questions please call me at 217/785-6276.