



ALTERNATIVE FUELS CORRIDOR

Alternative Fuels Corridor Signage Development and Installation Checklist

South Carolina was one of the first states that successfully obtained Alternative Fuel Corridor designations and deployed signage through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Palmetto Clean Fuels (PCF) coalition, along with the Energy Office of the SC Office of Regulatory Staff, has developed an overview of the steps necessary to implement approved signage to serve as a guide to other states looking to do the same.

Background

Section 1413 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act requires the Secretary of Transportation to designate national electric vehicle (EV) charging, hydrogen (HYD), propane (LPG), and natural gas (CNG/LNG) fueling corridors. The FHWA is working with other federal, state, and local officials, as well as private industry, to help plan and promote an interstate network of stations that will fuel vehicles powered by clean and domestically produced alternative fuels, so commercial and passenger vehicles can reliably travel between cities, regions, and across the entire nation.

Since 2016, the FHWA has been designating [Alternative Fuel Corridors](#). Designations have been assigned to each corridor segment as one of two options:

- **“Corridor-Ready”** - A sufficient number of facilities exist on the corridor to allow for corridor travel using one or more alternative fuels; and
- **“Corridor-Pending”** - An insufficient number of facilities currently exist on the corridor to allow for corridor travel using one or more alternative fuels.

Receiving Alternative Fuel Corridor Designations

Before undertaking the signage implementation process, states will first have to submit and receive designation from the FHWA that the corridor is “corridor-ready.” States should follow [guidance released by the FHWA](#) on how to submit these corridor nominations during an open call for nominations.

Signage Development and Installation Checklist

In December 2016, the FHWA released a memorandum to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) titled: [MUTCD-Signing for Designated Alternative Fuels Corridors](#). This document provides guidance on the design and appropriate use of signs for Alternative Fuel Corridors. This document should be used as a guide in designing and installing signage along alternate fuel corridors.

Meet with State DOT Representatives

- States should work with state Departments of Transportation (DOT) representatives to determine the interest in Alternative Fuel Corridor designations and signage implementation. Inform, when necessary, on alternative fuels, while discussing the process to implement signage.

Compile Signage Request

- Using MUTCD guidance, states should create a detailed request to the state DOT. This request should include specific maps and text defining designated “corridor-ready” corridors and signage locations.

Signage locations should include:

MUTCD plaque type: M4-14 “BEGIN”

Corridor: I-20

Location: Camden

Direction: Southbound

Using GIS or another mapping software, states may find it useful to place signs on a map to visually represent locations. Use [the Energy Office’s signage request to SCDOT](#) as an example.

NOTE: In the MUTCD memo, FHWA only gives guidance for signing the beginning and ending of a designated corridor. On corridors with multiple fuels designated for different parts of the corridor, signage will need to be placed to indicate the change in corridor designation.

EXAMPLE: I-26 is designated for LPG for the entire corridor. I-26 is partially designated for EV. Signage indicating the “BEGIN” of the LPG corridor would need to be placed, and signage indicating the change to the LPG/EV corridor would need to be placed. Signage would also need to be placed at the end of these corridor segments to indicate a change in fuel type designated for that section of corridor.

Submit Signage Request

- States should submit the signage request to the state DOT. The contact is usually the state traffic engineer.

Obtain Approval/Recognition of Request

- After a request has received approval from the state DOT, the process of implementation can begin, and a cost estimate can be provided. An example of a response from a state DOT can be found in the [SCDOT AFV Corridor Signage Response](#) to the Energy Office.

Receive a Cost Estimate

- Cost estimates will vary based on where the signs are manufactured and who will be paying for labor or other fees.

The Energy Office received estimated costs from SCDOT. The cost for each sign was priced based on square foot. The Energy Office was able to obtain more cost-efficient signage by purchasing from the SC Department of Corrections (SCDC) sign shop. Lower costs were attributed to using the SCDC Prison Industries instead of the SCDOT sign shop to fabricate the signs. While the Energy Office covered the costs of the signage, SCDOT covered labor and installation costs. Although initial pricing was included in the [SCDOT AFV Corridor Signage Response](#), final pricing can be found in the [Invoice Cover Letter](#).

Work with the State DOT to Install Signage

- Each state DOT will tackle signage installation in its own way. Some state DOTs will coordinate signage installation through regional sites. Work through the signage installation process outlined by the state DOT.

NOTE: In the MUTCD memo, FHWA only gives guidance for general service signage along a designated corridor. This guidance *does not* include specific service or “logo” signage. Additional requirements must be met for a station to be signed at an exit on a “logo” sign, such as the signs that say “Gas.”












Coordinate with Neighboring States

- As states being to implement the MUTCD guidance, corridors and other routes will likely cross state lines. To avoid duplication, neighboring states should work together to coordinate signage.

Resources

1. FHWA [Alternative Fuel Corridors](#) website
2. FHWA Memorandum to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) titled: [MUTCD-Signing for Designated Alternative Fuels Corridors](#)
3. The Energy Office's [AFV Corridor Signage Proposal](#) to SCDOT
4. SCDOT's [AFV Corridor Signage Response](#) to the Energy Office
5. [Invoice Cover Letter](#) from SCDOT to the Energy Office for the purchase of signage

Signs Associated with Alternative Fuel Corridors and Associated MUTCD Plaque Numbers

	D18-1
	M4-14
	M4-6
	09-11a
	09-11 b (Alternate)
	09-11 d
	09-11e
	D9-11f
	D9-11GP
	D9-11HP
	W26-1

Additional Assistance

PCF staff can provide guidance in navigating any of the above steps. For more information, visit the [PCF website](#).