



## A PROCEDURE FOR MANAGING OUTDOOR ADVERTISING AND IMPLEMENTING CONDITIONS OF CONTROL

This section provides a new approach to the management of outdoor advertising and the implementation of SAMOAC

# 6.1

## PRINCIPLES FOR MANAGING OUTDOOR ADVERTISING

The management of outdoor advertising relates to both environmental management and land use planning and control. Any procedure for managing outdoor advertising should therefore be based on the main principles reflected in existing land use and environmental legislation, policy documents and guidelines.

The following principles, which are relevant to the management of outdoor advertising, were identified from such documentation:<sup>1</sup>

### **6.1.1 Democracy and Equality:**

- Recognising the individual's democratic rights and obligations.
- Ensuring that everyone affected by outdoor advertising management and development actions or decisions will enjoy equal protection and benefits, and that no unfair discrimination should be allowed.

### **6.1.2 Economic Development**

- Promoting economic development opportunities in order to meet society's needs and to advance the wellbeing of communities.
- Ensuring that previously disadvantaged communities and areas will receive definite and direct benefits from outdoor advertising development
- Considering potential economic benefits to be derived from outdoor advertising against potential benefits to be obtained from alternative applications of perceptual resources.

### **6.1.3 Sustainability and Impact Assessment**

- The sustainable management and use of the perceptual resources making up the natural and built environment together with the sustainable management of any biophysical resources which may be of relevance.
- Considering, assessing and evaluating the social, economic and environmental impacts of outdoor advertisements and signs, including disadvantages and benefits, resulting in appropriate decisions in the light of such consideration and assessment.
- Ensuring that the social costs of outdoor advertising proposals are outweighed by the social benefits
- Resolving or mitigating any negative impacts while at the same time enhancing positive aspects of outdoor advertisements and signs.
- Assessing cumulative impacts and benefits.
- Considering the potential impact of outdoor advertisements and signs in terms of society as a whole and not only in terms of the applicant and immediate neighbours.

<sup>1</sup> National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998  
Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000  
Integrated Coastal Management Act 24 of 2008  
White Paper on Spatial Planning and Land Use Management  
EIA Regulations GN R385  
DEAT: Integrated Environmental Assessment Series. Strategic Environmental Assessment

- Being pro-active instead of reactive by guiding and facilitating instead of impeding or merely controlling development.
- The application of a risk-averse and precautionary approach under conditions of uncertainty.
- The consideration of alternative options (alternative uses of the perceptual environment and alternative development opportunities for outdoor advertising).
- Ensuring the independency and impartiality of the planning team or consultant implementing the procedure.

#### **6.1.4 Public Participation and Transparency**

- The involvement and inclusion of local communities and all other interested and affected parties (I&AP's) in the planning and decision-making process from the very beginning of the process.
- Taking the needs, interests and values of all I&AP's into consideration.
- A fair and transparent process. Decisions should be made in the public domain – no decision should be made behind closed doors. All I&AP's should have a right to access information.
- The creation of accessible participatory structures and the empowerment of stakeholders to participate effectively.

#### **6.1.5 Efficiency and Co-governance**

- Producing the desired results with the minimum expenditure of resources.
- Ensuring effective institutional arrangements and operations by coordinating and integrating the resources, policies, legislation and initiatives of all authorities responsible for outdoor advertising control, land use planning and environmental management at different spheres of government.
- Promoting partnerships between government, the private sector and civil society in order to ensure co-responsibility for the management of the perceptual environment.
- Ensuring a uniform management procedure for the whole country and aligning outdoor advertising management with other relevant land use and environmental procedures.

#### **6.1.6 Integrated Planning**

- Following a holistic approach by taking the interaction between people and the perceptual environment and the interrelationship between all sign types and other visual elements into consideration.
- Integrating and coordinating all needs, perceptions and inputs of all I&AP's and disciplines in order to obtain maximum consensus.
- Ensuring the spatial integration of outdoor advertising planning of contiguous municipalities and regions.

# 6.2

## MAIN PROBLEMS CONCERNING OUTDOOR ADVERTISING CONTROL

Any procedure for outdoor advertising management and impact assessment should be aimed at solving the main problems experienced by controlling authorities and other I&AP's. These problems were identified as:

- Lack of resources. Most municipalities and provincial roads authorities do not have the necessary skills and manpower for managing outdoor advertising. This problem must be seen against the background of a large number of municipalities struggling to provide basic services such as water reticulation, sewage and refuse removal. In this light the management of outdoor advertising is seen as a low priority by most controlling authorities.
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- The large number of billboards erected illegally
- No or poor records of third party commercial advertisements and especially billboards. In most cases no effective databases for such information exist or databases are not updated.
- Poor coordination between:
  - Various municipal sections or departments with an interest in outdoor advertising.
  - Contiguous municipalities
  - Controlling authorities at various tiers of government
- Poor integration of initiatives. The management of outdoor advertising is not coordinated and integrated with land use planning and control and with other environmental and development initiatives.
- The cumbersome and time-consuming procedure currently followed by applying for billboards and signs on an individual basis.
- No holistic and integrated approach to the management of outdoor advertising. Individual billboards and signs are treated in isolation while the cumulative impacts and benefits of signs and advertisements are not taken into consideration.
- A disregard for the perceptual environment. The value of the perceptual environment as environmental (pleasant living and working environments) and economic (tourism and outdoor advertising) resource is not recognised by most controlling authorities.
- Unsustainable utilisation of resources. Outdoor advertising and the perceptual environment as an economic and environmental resource are not utilised sustainably.
- Ineffective utilisation of resources. As an economic resource outdoor advertising is not utilised optimally by being either under or over-utilised. Outdoor advertising is often seen by municipalities as a quick way of acquiring much needed funds whereby far too many high impacting signs and billboards are allowed. In other cases a minimum or no high impacting signs are allowed due to a lack of capacity to manage and control such signs.
- A disregard for local character. Outdoor advertising is not utilised optimally for enhancing the perceptual environment and sense of place
- Lack of public participation.
- Lack of benefits for local communities. Benefits accrued from outdoor advertising do not filter down to local communities.
- Political lobbying. The current system of outdoor advertising control is susceptible to corruption and political lobbying.

- Lack of transparency. At municipalities decisions are often taken at council level with no inputs from local communities or other interested and affected parties.
- Lack of pro-active approach. The management of outdoor advertising is not pro-active by:
- Identifying and promoting development opportunities.
- Addressing environmental impacts.
- Enhancing the perceptual environment.

# 6.3

OUTDOOR ADVERTISING  
POTENTIAL ASSESSMENTS  
(OAPA'S), AND  
OUTDOOR ADVERTISING  
MASTER PLANS  
(OAMP'S)  
- FIG. 10

The OAPA-procedure which results in the development of OAMP's for specific municipal areas of jurisdiction reflects the above-mentioned principles under 6.1 and is aimed at solving the problems mentioned under 6.2.

This procedure consists of four stages, namely:

- The analysis of data
- The synthesis of data
- The result or product consisting of an OAMP
- The implementation of the OAMP

A multi-disciplinary team consisting of independent consultants or other professionals should be responsible for implementing the procedure with outdoor advertising, landscape aesthetics/design and traffic engineering the three most important fields of expertise to be represented on the team.

### **6.3.1 Analysis**

Data analysis consists of two components namely socio-economic needs and values and environmental potential and sensitivity.

#### **(a) Socio-economic needs and values**

It is important that all role-players and interested and affected parties be identified and involved in the procedure and that a consensus should be reached between opposing needs as far as possible.

##### **(i) Outdoor advertising needs**

Involving representatives from the outdoor advertising industry will ensure the viability of advertising opportunities and will simplify the detail positioning of certain sign types at a later stage.

It may also be necessary to involve other role-players such as estate agents, shop owners, owners of shopping centres, etc.

##### **(ii) Community needs and values**

Local communities should be able to identify their needs and preferences at neighbourhood level. One community may be willing to allow certain sign types in their neighbourhood while another community may prefer not to do that. Communities allowing signs in their neighbourhoods should be entitled to specific benefits arising from the advertising rights for such signs while such benefits should be in accordance with the communities' identified needs.

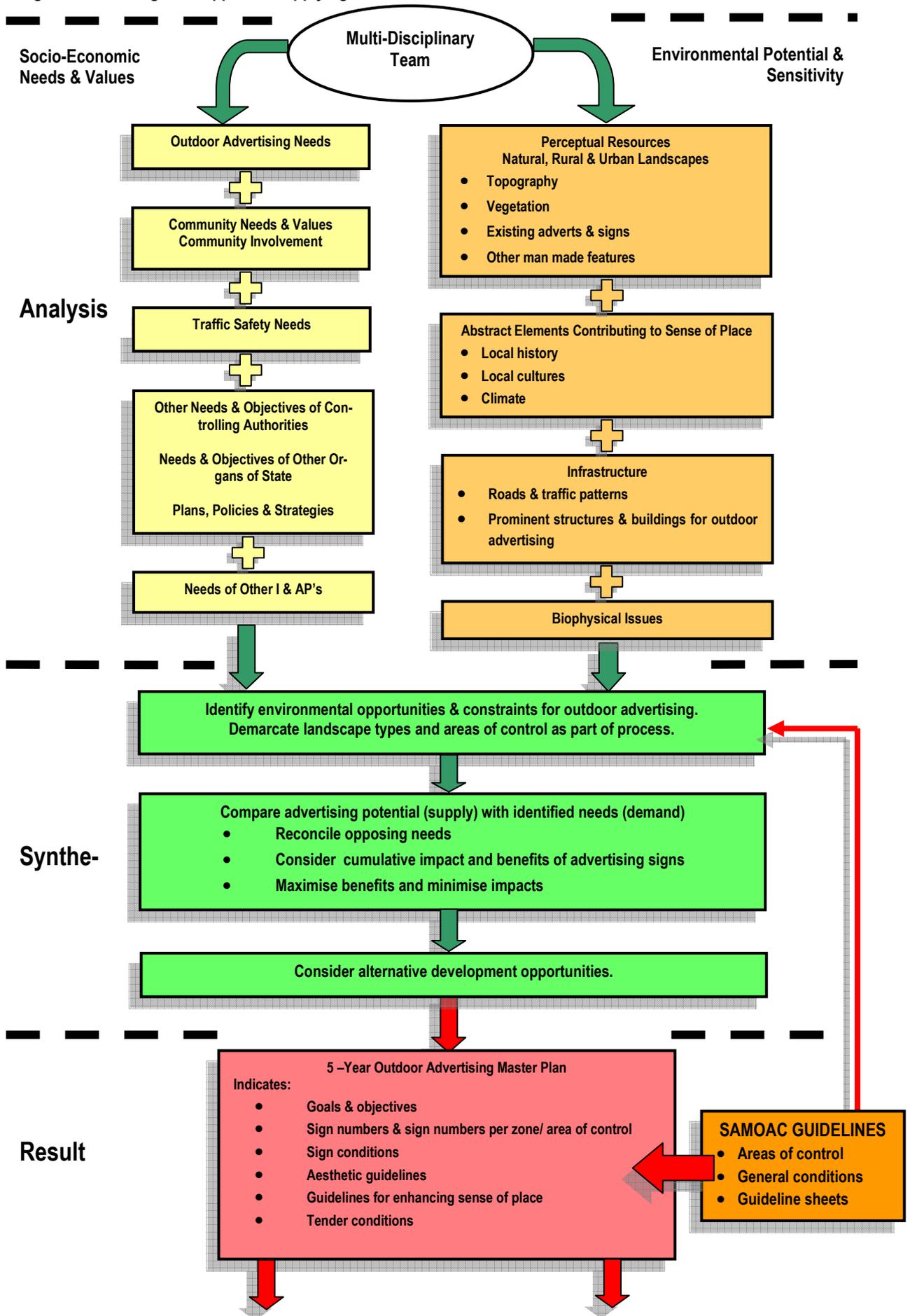
##### **(iii) Traffic safety needs**

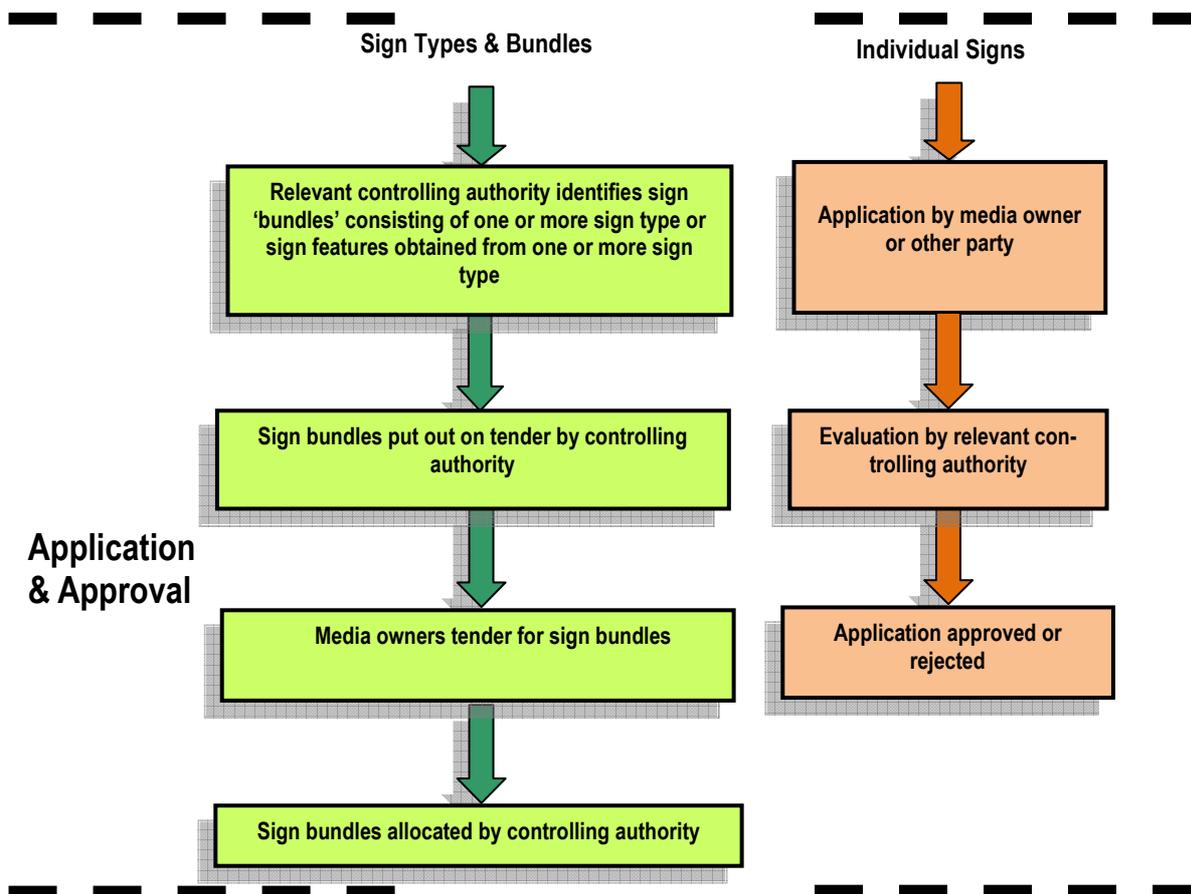
It is important that the traffic safety needs, policies and goals of the controlling authorities at various levels of government should be coordinated and harmonised.

##### **(iv) Needs of controlling authorities and other organs of state**

Apart from traffic safety needs other needs of controlling authorities and other organs of state

Figure 10: An Integrated Approach: Applying the OAPA Procedure





with an interest in outdoor advertising should also be taken into consideration, especially priorities and objectives as reflected by plans and strategies such as Integrated Development Plans (IDP's), Spatial Development Frameworks (SDF's), Land Use Management Systems (LUMS) and Environmental Management Frameworks (EMF's). (See Fig. 11)

**(v) Needs of other interested and affected parties**

This may include the needs of groups such as historical and architectural societies and environmental pressure groups

**(b) Environmental potential and sensitivity**

**(i) Perceptual resources**

Perceptual resources form the most important part of the analysis of environmental potential and sensitivity. It includes man-made and natural elements in both urban and non-urban environments such as topography, geological features, vegetation and architectural style of buildings.

A survey of existing signs and advertisements should be included in order to get an indication of the existing state of the perceptual environment. Such a survey should also form the basis for a register for higher impacting signs and advertisements.

**(ii) Abstract elements contributing to sense of place**

It is important that perceptual resources should be interpreted in terms of local character or sense of place which will also include more abstract elements such as local history, culture

and climate. The main elements of sense of place will play an important role in the design of sign structures.

### **(iii) Infrastructure**

Roads infrastructure and traffic patterns provide a basis for determining outdoor advertising potential and for road safety management requirements.

Prominent structures such as tall buildings, silos, towers and bridges which may serve as advertising structures should also be identified.

### **(iv) Biophysical and other environmental issues**

Although the direct ecological impact of outdoor advertising seems insignificant compared to its impact on perceptual and especially visual resources, such ecological impact cannot be ignored completely and sites sensitive to the construction of outdoor advertising structures should be identified. The practice of removing or poisoning trees to improve the visibility of billboards should also be taken into account.

The possibility of sound and light pollution is another aspect to be considered.

## **6.3.2 Synthesis**

This phase consists of a number of integrated steps:

- (a) Identifying the potential and sensitivity of the environment for outdoor advertising by taking all environmental factors into consideration. The demarcation of areas of control by using the guidelines provided in SAMOAC forms an important step in this process.
- (b) Compare advertising potential (supply) with identified needs (demand) while at the same time:
  - ◆ Reconciling opposing needs
  - ◆ Considering the cumulative impact and benefits of advertising signs
  - ◆ Maximising benefits and minimising impacts
- (c) Compare and evaluate alternative development options. This includes alternative development options for outdoor advertising as well as comparing outdoor advertising with other development options and benefits derived from the perceptual environments such as tourism development

## **6.3.3 Result or Product**

The synthesis results in an Outdoor Advertising Master Plan (OAMP) for a specific municipal area. By making use of SAMOAC as a guideline document such an OAMP should indicate:

- Goals and objectives regarding the management of outdoor advertising and the perceptual environment in general.
- Sign types and sign numbers for the various areas of control indicated spatially. The location

of certain sign types may be indicated in more detail by being limited to specific streets or zones within the various areas of control or even to specific buildings or sites.

- Sign conditions on aspects such as location, size, height, illumination, etc.
- Aesthetic guidelines on aspects such as design style for both sign structures and sign content.
- Guidelines for enhancing sense of place based on the main aspects which define such sense of place.
- Tender conditions.
- Benefits to be derived from outdoor advertising rights. Needs identified by the various local communities should be taken into consideration.

OAPA's and OAMP's should not be treated in isolation. It will be more effective in terms of both functionality and costs if coordinated and aligned with other plans, policies and strategies such as EMF's, local tourism plans and heritage initiatives. It may serve as a catalyst for establishing such local policies and plans where it does not exist. This may contribute to economic development and the creation of employment opportunities. OAMP's should also be incorporated into higher order plans, policies and strategies such as master plans for the perceptual environment, IDP's, SDF's and LUMS (See Fig.11).

OAMP's should be revised every 5 years, but allowance should be made for smaller changes when required.

### **6.3.4 Implementation**

Most of the commercial third party sign types can be allocated to media owners by means of a tender procedure which will simplify the process of sign approval and allocation. More than one sign type may even be combined in a single bundle for tender purposes.

Following a tender procedure may imply that a smaller number of media owners will be able to enter the market which will be to the advantage of the larger media owners. SMME's and previously disadvantaged media owners may become involved by forming consortiums with larger media owners or certain tender bundles may be reserved for previously disadvantaged media owners or SMME's.

Certain sign types for which specific consent is required, such as shop signs, cannot be approved by means of a tender procedure and still need to be applied for on an individual basis.

Only one controlling authority should be responsible for administering the OAMP, allocating tenders and considering sign applications.

A mechanism should be devised to distribute the income derived from advertising rights amongst the various controlling authorities involved.

For monitoring an OAMP resources from the various controlling authorities involved should be combined under the authority responsible for administering the OAMP.

Figure 11: Alignment and Incorporation of Outdoor Advertising Master Plan

