

# Local Rules for Political Signs

The City of Carlsbad allows political and other noncommercial signs under various conditions, depending on whether the sign is on private property, along a major street in a commercial area (“public right-of-way”) or in a traditional public forum area, such as a public park or outside City Hall. Please review Carlsbad Municipal Code Chapter 11.44 (Private Party Signs on City Property) and Chapter 21.41 (Sign Ordinance) for full details.

## Private property

CMC Section 21.41.040

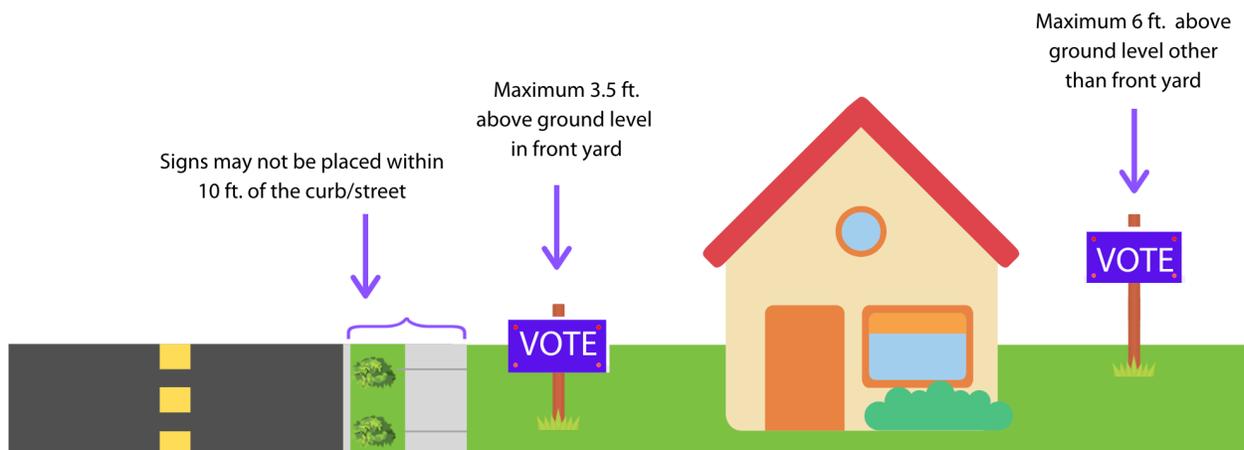
You may put political signs or any other noncommercial\* signs on residential and non-residential property year-round with the permission of the property owner. The maximum allowable size increases during campaign periods.

	<b>Year-round</b> <i>Except campaign periods</i>	<b>During a campaign period</b> <i>30 days prior and 5 days following an election</i>
<b>Permit required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. Need property owner permission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same</li> </ul>
<b>Type and max size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>8 sq. ft.</b> total signage per residential unit or nonresidential establishment</li> <li>Wall, freestanding or window sign**</li> <li>Sign may not be illuminated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>10 sq. ft.</b> total signage per residential unit or nonresidential establishment</li> <li>The additional 2 sq. ft. must be a freestanding sign</li> </ul>
<b>Where</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 feet in from the curb***</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same</li> </ul>
<b>Height</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Front yard - not more than 3.5 ft. above ground level measured to the top of the sign</li> <li>Elsewhere - not more than 6 ft. above ground level measured to the top of the sign</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same</li> </ul>

\*See CMC Section 21.41.020(A)(53) for definition of “noncommercial message”

\*\*Flags are also permitted on residential and nonresidential property, see CMC Section 21.41.040 Table A for rules

\*\*\* Signs may not be in the public right-of-way on residential streets (usually about 10 feet from the curb or street edge)



## Traditional public forum areas

CMC Section 11.44.030

Political or other noncommercial signs may be displayed at any time of year in areas considered traditional public forums, as long as a person is holding the signs or within 5 feet of the signs, among other rules. Traditional public forum areas include locations such as public parks, city streets, public sidewalks and the exterior areas around City Hall.

<b>Permit required</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No</li></ul>
<b>When</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sunrise to sunset*</li></ul>
<b>Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each sign must be personally held or a person must be physically within 5 ft. of the sign at all times</li><li>• No inflatable signs</li></ul>
<b>Max size</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>10 sq. ft.</b> total for all signs held by a single person</li><li>• Max size of any one sign personally attended by two or more persons is <b>50 sq. ft.</b></li></ul>
<b>Where</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Traditional public forums, such as public parks, city streets, public sidewalks and exterior areas around City Hall</li><li>• People displaying signs may not stand in any vehicular traffic lane that is in use</li><li>• People displaying signs on public sidewalks must give 5 ft. clearance for pedestrians</li></ul>
<b>Height</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not regulated</li></ul>

*\*Some exceptions apply, see CMC Sections 11.44.030(B) and 11.44.030(G)*

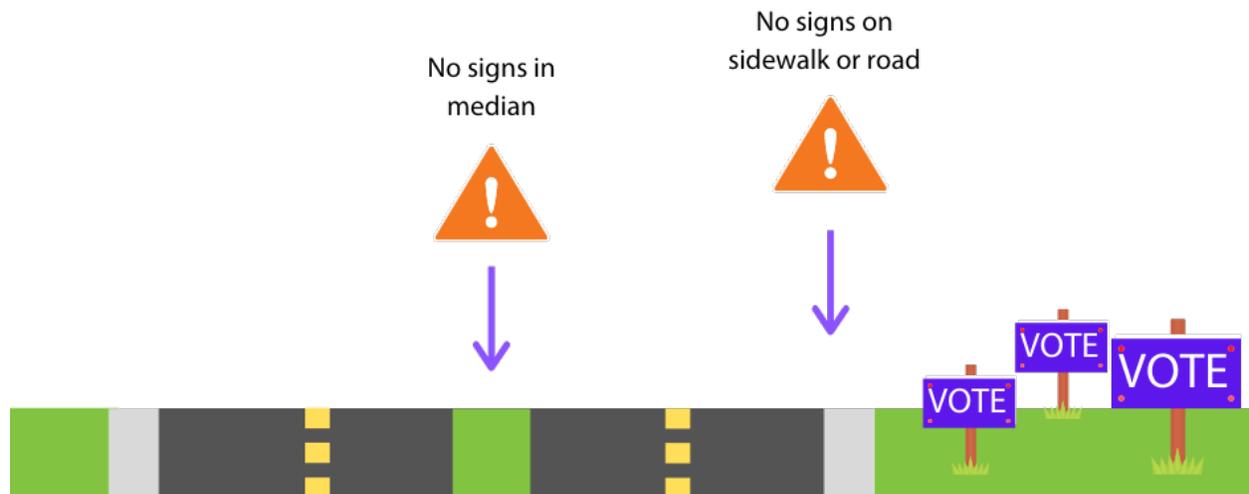


## Along major nonresidential city streets (public right-of-way)

CMC Section 11.44.070

Political and other noncommercial signs may be placed along major streets in commercial and industrial areas (see map on next page) only with a permit and **only during campaign periods**.

- When**
- During a campaign period (30 days prior and 5 days following an election)
- Permit required**
- Yes. \$67
  - Call 760-602-4610 or go the city's website and search for the [P-11\(B\) permit application](#)
- Type and max size**
- Sign must be able to withstand normal weather conditions for period of display and mounted so it won't blow away
  - **6 sq. ft.** per sign
- Where**
- Public right-of-way in "commercial/industrial" zones and "major" roads (see map on p. 4)
  - May not attach to utility poles or boxes, traffic control signs or device supports, trees, other signs or bus benches
  - May not place in the road, on a sidewalk, in a median strip or in any portion of the public right-of-way or easement past the sidewalk without consent of adjoining property owner/possessor
  - May not block any other permitted sign or obstruct public access, such as sidewalks, or vehicle visibility
- Height**
- Not less than 1 ft. above ground level and not more than 6 ft. above ground level measured to the top of the sign



### Enforcement

For clarification of campaign sign rules or to report a violation, please call Code Enforcement, 760-602-2703. Any violation of the city's sign ordinances may result in a request to remove the violating sign(s) (on private property), immediate removal of the signs (on city property) and/or the issuance of an administrative citation.



## Right-of-way Signs

Noncommercial signs, including campaign signs, are allowed 30 days before and 5 days after an election in the public rights-of-way along major roads and in the city's commercial/industrial areas. Signs are not allowed in street medians.

— Where campaign signs are allowed in the public rights-of-way.



# Common Sign Sizes

The city's sign rules specify the total square footage of signs allowed and in some cases the maximum allowable size of a single sign. Below are the square footage calculations for common sign sizes.

