

***CITY OF WEST COVINA
POLITICAL SIGN PROVISIONS
AND IMPLEMENTATION POLICY***

The West Covina Municipal Code (Chapter 26) allows political signs to be displayed on private property and within the public right-of-way parkways subject to certain time, location, and size regulations. The regulations address both aesthetic concerns as well as public safety concerns. These regulations are found primarily within the Sign Code (WCMC Section 26-314) and are categorized as temporary non-commercial signs. The following is a summary of these regulations and the City's policy for implementing these regulations.

TIME LIMITATIONS ON DISPLAY OF POLITICAL SIGNS

Political signs may be erected no more than 75 days prior to an election and must be removed within 10 days after an election. Candidates are strongly encouraged to log the location of each sign posted to allow for complete removal of signs after the election.

PROHIBITED SIGNS LOCATIONS

Signs may not be placed in or on a public street, alley, median island, sidewalk right-of-way, or easement, except as provided for in the following described conditions. Also, under no conditions may political signs be attached to utility poles, traffic control boxes, or other public property (including parks, fire stations, Community Development Commission owned properties, etc.).

Additionally, notwithstanding any of the following provisions, no sign shall prevent or interfere with free ingress to or egress from any door, window, or fire escape, or shall be located or maintained in such a place or in such a manner as to constitute an immediate hazard to the safety of or block the path of travel of pedestrians or vehicular traffic.

SIGNS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Signs may be placed on private property with the prior written consent of the property owner. Such signs on private property shall not exceed eight (8) feet in any dimension or 32 square feet in area.

Signs attached to a private wall, fence, or building may project into the public right-of-way no more than six (6) inches. This provision is intended to avoid hazards to pedestrians and vehicles.

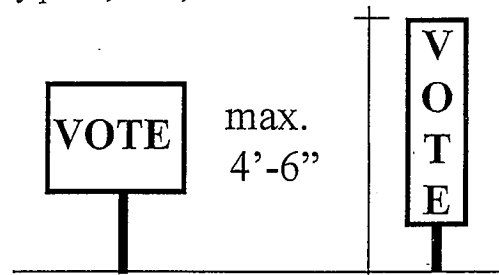
SIGNS WITHIN PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY PARKWAYS

Signs are not permitted on public property except in certain areas such as parkways. "Parkways" is defined as that area between the sidewalk or, if there is no sidewalk, the adjoining property line and the curb, which is part of the public street right-of-way, although, maintained as part of a private yard.

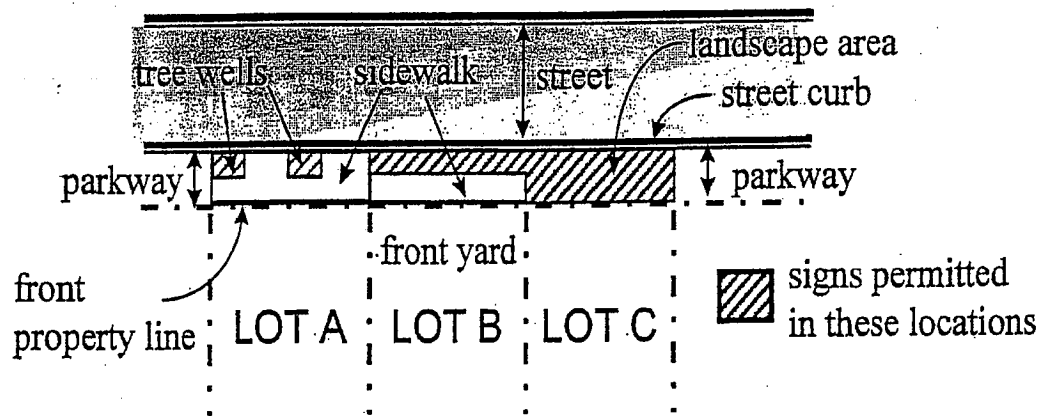
Signs may be placed on stakes or other support devices, either in the ground in public parkways or in the tree wells of street trees in such parkways. Signs must be free standing. Signs may not be attached to utility poles, trees, or tree stakes.

Maximum sign area -
5 square feet

Maximum sign height -
4 feet - 6 inches



There are three typical examples of locations where signs are permitted in the parkway as depicted below for Lots A, B, and C.



If you wish to post signs in either parkways or trees wells abutting a residential property, it is suggested you first obtain permission of the property owner (except where the side or rear of the property abuts a major street and the property is separated from the street by a solid fence or wall). The reason for this is that most homeowners view their property as extending to the curb and in fact maintain this property along with their own. Therefore, for purposes of political signs and other forms of temporary non-commercial signs, the City wishes to respect that common perception. More importantly, without permission, the property owner might remove the sign and throw it away.

IMPLEMENTATION POLICY FOR POLITICAL SIGN REGULATIONS

The City will generally undertake enforcement action on violations as complaints are received. If it is noticed that an excessive number of violations are occurring, the City may undertake proactive enforcement. Priority will be given to violations where the placement of signs creates a potential hazard or where signs have been affixed to utility poles, light standards, street trees, placed in median strips, public park areas or other prohibited public property. The City does not intend to rigidly enforce otherwise minor variations such as precise sign size, height from ground surface, etc., but will respond to such issues on a complaint basis.

Complaint Initiated Enforcement - Staff will investigate complaints and will initiate enforcement action of verified violations. Complaints may be filed by calling the Community Enhancement Division at (626) 939-8426 or in person at the Public Works Department counter in Room 215 of City Hall, Monday through Thursday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Additionally, complaints may be phoned in after working hours and left on voice mail or sent via fax to (626) 939-8660. Complaints require a contact name and phone number.

Questions regarding the Sign Code provisions for political signs can also be answered by phoning the Planning Department during business hours at (626) 939-8422.

Enforcement Timing - Staff will enforce the following policy for the respective categories of signs:

- ***Signs posing an immediate threat to safety or blocking the path of travel*** - Any sign constituting a hazard to the safety of or blocking the path of travel of pedestrians or vehicular traffic will be removed immediately. This provision applies whether the sign is located on public or private property, and whether or not the sign otherwise complies with the Code (Section 26-312 (e)(2)).
- ***Signs on public property*** - The Sign Code provides that the City may immediately remove any illegally posted political sign on public property and within the public right-of-way (Sec. 26-320 (a)). The City will utilize the following two-tiered enforcement policy:
 1. ***Immediate Removal***
Signs that are placed in prohibited locations, including signs attached to utility poles, utility boxes, light poles, street trees, or signs placed in median islands, public parks, or on public facilities, will be subject to immediate removal.

2. *Removal after Courtesy Notice*

Where signs are placed in a permitted location, but exceed maximum size or height limits, an attempt will first be made to contact the sign owner and provide a 72-hour period to remove the sign or correct the violation. If the candidate fails to correct the violation within 72 hours of the City's attempt to notify the candidate of the violation, the City will remove the sign(s) in violation.

- ***Signs on Private Property*** - When the City observes or receives a complaint regarding an illegal sign on private property, the City will attempt to notify the owner of the sign and the owner of the property on which the sign is located of the violation. Such notice may be in person, by telephone, or written and will state the location of the sign and the nature of the violation. If the identification of the owner is not provided on the sign, the owner will be presumed to be the candidate identified on the sign or the campaign committee of the candidate or ballot cause identified on the sign. The sign owner and/or property owner will be provided a period of 72 hours from the time that notification is made or is first attempted to be made to remove the sign or correct the violation.

If neither the party can be contacted, the City will remove the sign after 72 hours from the first attempt to contact the sign owner/property owner.

Storage and Retrieval of Signs - The City will store signs that have been removed and make them available for retrieval by the sign owner. Signs may be retrieved during normal business hours by appointment only by phoning (626) 939-8426. Signs not retrieved within ten (10) days after the election will be disposed of.

Payment of Cost for Abatement of Illegal Signs - In the event that the City must remove a sign or signs, the Sign Code (Sec. 26-320 (c) and (d)) provides for the City to impose a charge to the owner of signs placed illegally in an amount equal to the City's cost of abatement. The cost of abatement will be based upon enforcement actions following the City's notice to the candidate or property owner.