

# **Ventura County Grand Jury 2017 - 2018**



## **Final Report**

## **Campaign Signs**

## **April 5, 2018**

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## **Campaign Signs**

### **Summary**

The 2017-2018 Ventura County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) conducted an investigation into political sign-placement policies in Ventura County (County). The Grand Jury investigated five cities: San Buenaventura (Ventura), Oxnard, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, and Simi Valley.

The Grand Jury concluded four of the five cities' and the County's sign policies could be clearer and easier for candidates to follow. It is recommended that the County and the four cities rewrite their campaign sign-placement regulations to provide more definitive direction to candidates. The Grand Jury concluded the City of Simi Valley's policies are exemplary, presenting campaign sign information in a clear and concise manner.

### **Background**

The Grand Jury received a complaint alleging unlawful removal of political signs.

Incorporated cities have their own policies regarding political sign placement. There are regulations as to how far in advance election signs can be placed and how quickly after an election they must be removed. The size and content of the signs, as well as the placement, may also be regulated.

The County has its own sign-placement policy for unincorporated areas. The State Department of Transportation, through the Outdoor Advertising Act, regulates the placement of signs near State or County highways.

Candidates and their designees are responsible for knowing the regulations and whom to contact in the appropriate jurisdiction if there is an issue or question. Failure to comply with regulations could result in the removal of signs, with possible penalties imposed.

### **Methodology**

The Grand Jury reviewed the political sign-placement policies of the five largest incorporated cities in the County: Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, Thousand Oaks and Simi Valley. The Grand Jury contacted the Ventura County Clerk and the five City Clerks and requested sign-placement policies and/or candidate manuals.

### **Facts**

**FA-01.** The County provides political candidates with a manual containing written policies related to sign placement within the unincorporated areas of the County. If questions arise, a phone number is provided to reach the Ventura County Planning Department. (Att-01)

**FA-02.** The City of Ventura provides political candidates with written policies related to sign placement within city limits. It also provides the County policies in the candidate manual. (Att-02)

- FA-03.** Of the five largest incorporated cities in the County, Ventura is the only city that allows campaign signs on public property within city limits.
- FA-04.** The City of Oxnard provides political candidates with written policies related to sign placement within city limits. It also provides the County policies in the candidate manual. (Att-03)
- FA-05.** The City of Camarillo provides political candidates with written policies related to sign placement. There are distinct policies for three defined zones within city limits: residential, commercial, and industrial/agricultural. The policies are nonspecific regarding timeframe for sign removal. County policies are also supplied in the candidate manual. The Code Enforcement Division phone number is provided with the policies. (Att-04)
- FA-06.** The City of Thousand Oaks provides political candidates with a two-page written policy composed of excerpts from the municipal code related to sign placement. The policy includes a website link to the entire municipal code. The City also provides the County policies in the candidate manual. (Att-05)
- FA-07.** The City of Simi Valley furnishes political candidates with written policies related to sign placement within city limits. It also provides the County policies in the candidate manual. Candidates are invited to a half-day orientation offering an overview of City government and policies. Prior to the start of the sign-posting period, letters and an illustrative flyer are mailed to candidates reminding them of City sign-posting regulations. (Att-06)

## **Conclusions**

- C-01.** The Grand Jury concluded the County's restrictions on campaign sign posting are vague in the candidate manual. A complete list of restrictions can only be found on the actual political sign registration form. (FA-01)
- C-02.** The Grand Jury concluded the City of Ventura's sign-placement requirements for public property placement are unclear. For example, the regulation states signs may be placed in the public right-of-way, but should not "be located in a manner that may constitute a traffic hazard or create a hazardous condition for persons using the public right-of-way." (FA-02, FA-03)
- C-03.** The Grand Jury concluded the City of Oxnard's sign-placement policy provides insufficient direction regarding placement of campaign signs on private property. (FA-04)
- C-04.** The Grand Jury concluded the City of Camarillo's sign-placement policy is unnecessarily complicated because it requires candidates to know city zoning maps in order to comply with sign-placement regulations. (FA-05)
- C-05.** The Grand Jury concluded the City of Thousand Oaks' political sign-placement policy is insufficient as it relies solely on excerpts from the

municipal code. Although a link to the full municipal code is provided in the policy, it is difficult for candidates to navigate. (FA-06)

- C-06.** The Grand Jury concluded the City of Simi Valley’s political sign-placement policy provides precise direction to candidates regarding sign placement. The written regulations, as well as a one-page illustrative flyer, make campaign sign requirements clear and concise. (FA-07)

## **Recommendation**

- R-01.** The Grand Jury recommends that the County and the cities of Ventura, Oxnard, Camarillo, and Thousand Oaks rewrite their campaign sign-placement regulations to provide more definitive direction to candidates. This is uniquely important for the City of Ventura, which is the only city to allow campaign signs on public property. The City of Simi Valley’s policy is an example of clear and concise election sign rules and regulations. (C-01, C-02, C-03, C-04, C-05, C-06)

## **Responses**

### Responses Required From:

City Council, City of Camarillo (C-04, R-01)

City Council, City of Oxnard (C-03, R-01)

City Council, City of Simi Valley (C-06, R-01)

City Council, City of Thousand Oaks (C-05, R-01)

City Council, City of San Buenaventura (C-02, R-01)

Board of Supervisors, Ventura County (C-01, R-01)

## **Attachments**

**Att-01. County of Ventura Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

**Att-02. City of Ventura Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

**Att-03. City of Oxnard Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

**Att-04. City of Camarillo Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

**Att-05. City of Thousand Oaks Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

**Att-06. City of Simi Valley Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

## **Glossary**

### **TERM**

County

Grand Jury

Ventura

### **DEFINITION**

County of Ventura

2017-2018 Ventura County Grand Jury

City of San Buenaventura

## **Attachment 01**

### **County of Ventura Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

## **POLITICAL SIGNS**

The placement of political signs is subject to regulation by the cities, county and state.

### **CITY**

Consult the appropriate City Clerk for information concerning local sign ordinances.

### **COUNTY**

The Ventura County Ordinance only regulates signs placed in the unincorporated areas of the county. You are encouraged to read it and if you have any questions relating to political signs, the staff of the Ventura County Planning Department will be happy to assist you. They can be reached at (805) 654-2488 or (805) 654-2451.



**COUNTY SIGNS - STANDARDS AND PERMITS**

County of Ventura Planning Code, Chapter 8, states:

**§8110-6.8 - Political Signs**

The purpose of this section is to prevent damage to Public property, protect the integrity of the electoral process and prevent the erosion of aesthetic quality and historic values within the County. It is specifically recognized that if temporary political signs on private property are not removed after the election is held, the deteriorating signs and accumulating debris become a blight, defacing the landscape. It is therefore an intent of this Article to make provision for the erection and removal of such signs after the election which they publicized has been held.

**§8110-6.8.1 - Political Signs on Private Property**

No temporary political sign face shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area. The aggregate area of all temporary signs placed or maintained on any lot in one ownership shall not exceed ninety-six (96) square feet.

**§8110-6.8.2 - Political Sign Registration**

In order to keep track of the placement of temporary political signs to assure removal subsequent to an election, such signs shall be registered with the Planning Department by the candidate or his or her registered agent, or, when a ballot proposition is involved, by an authorized agent of the group or organization sponsoring the signs, prior to the distribution of such signs for the attachment or installation on any property. Registration of political signs shall be on forms available in the Planning Department and shall be accompanied by an agreement signed by the candidate or his or her authorized agent, or when a ballot proposition is involved, by an authorized agent of the group or organization sponsoring the signs, that within ten calendar days after the election all political signs shall be removed, and a certified statement by the registrant that consent will be obtained from each owner of the property on which a sign is to be posted.

**§8110-6.8.3 - Location**

Political signs may not be affixed, installed, or erected within 100 feet of a polling place or historic site, nor within the right of way of any highway, nor within 660 feet of the edge of a "Scenic Highway" or landscaped freeway, nor in any location where the sign will impair sight distance or create a hazard to traffic or pedestrians, nor on any telephone pole, lamppost, tree, wall, fence, bridge, bench, hydrant, curbstone, sidewalk or other structure in or upon any public right-of-way, nor upon any other public property.

**§8110-6.8.4 - Time Frames**

Temporary political signs shall not be posted sooner than 90 days prior to a scheduled election administered by the County Elections Department. Said signs shall be removed within 10 days after the election.

**§8110-6.8.5 - Enforcement**

Except for signs remaining posted after the post-election deadline, any political sign not posted in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be deemed to be a public nuisance and shall be subject to removal by the candidate, property owner, or, when a ballot proposition is involved, the authorized agent of the group or organization sponsoring the sign or, upon their failure to do so after reasonable attempt at notice by the County, by County officers or zoning inspectors. Any political sign which is not removed within the specified period following an election shall be subject to summary removal and confiscation by the County.

**STATE**

As noted in the following letter from the State Department of Transportation, political signs within view of State or County highways are subject to the provisions of the Outdoor Advertising Act. The Division of Highways is prepared to answer questions about state regulation of campaign signs, call (916) 654-6473.

# county of ventura



## NOTICE TO ALL POLITICAL CANDIDATES

### POLITICAL CAMPAIGN SIGNS AND ADVERTISING IN COUNTY ROAD RIGHT OF WAY

**PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY**  
**JEFF PRATT**  
Agency Director

Watershed Protection Unit  
Tully R. Calkins, Director

Transportation Department  
David L. Fleisch, Director

Engineering Services Department  
Herbert L. Schirmer, Director

Water & Sanitation Department  
David J. Samsik, Director

Central Services Department  
Janice E. Turner, Director

As we enter into the election season, it is appropriate to remind all candidates that it is a violation of the County Encroachment Ordinance (Division 12 of the Ventura County Ordinance Code) to place political campaign or other such advertisements or endorsements in the County road right-of-way. This includes the center medians, sidewalk or paths, and the portion of the County road right-of-way immediately adjacent to the pavement. (Note: The County Encroachment Ordinance applies only to the unincorporated area of the County, however, most cities have similar ordinances.)

Similarly, it is a violation to place campaign signs or other such advertisements on official traffic signs, public utility poles, or other improvements located in the County road right-of-way.

When placing any advertisements, banners, or signs on private property, please make sure that you obtain the property owner's permission. Also, please make sure these signs or banners do not interfere with motorist sight distance or pedestrian use of the right-of-way, including sidewalks and the like.

Public Works Agency does not have the resources to enforce all violations of the Encroachment Ordinance. However, if we observe them or receive notifications, we will try to notify you first and give you the opportunity to move the item. If the encroachment obstructs or interferes with the public's safe use of the right-of-way, we may have to immediately remove any such encroachment without notifying you.

We felt you would want to be aware of this Ordinance to ensure you and your supporters comply with the County's rules and regulations regarding political campaign signs and advertising. It would also be appreciated if, as soon as possible after the election is over – win or lose – all of your signs and/or banners were removed. We all take pride in the appearance of our County.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

David Fleisch  
Director  
Transportation Department  
(805) 654-2077, [david.fleisch@ventura.org](mailto:david.fleisch@ventura.org)



In County road right-of-way

Hall of Administration L# 1600  
800 S. Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • (805) 654-2018 • FAX (805) 654-3952 • <http://www.ventura.org>



## **Political Sign Registration**

*County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division*  
800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009 • 805 654-2488 • <http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning>

CANDIDATE OR ISSUE: \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree that:

1. The candidate or issue proponent has obtained the consent of all property owners to place political signs on their property.
2. That all signs will be removed within ten calendar days after the election.
3. That all signs will comply with Sec. 8110-4 (Prohibited Signs), Sec. 8110.6.8.2 (Location) and Sec. 8110-6.8 (Political Signs) of the Ventura County Zoning Ordinance.
4. No temporary political sign shall exceed 32 square feet in area. The aggregate area of all temporary signs placed or maintained on any lot in one ownership shall not exceed 96 square feet.
5. Sec. 8110-4 - Prohibited Signs

The following signs and sign types are prohibited:

- a. Sandwich-board, A-frame and portable freestanding signs;
- b. Bench signs, except at bus stops designated on a valid bus schedule;
- c. Signs which flash, scintillate, move or rotate, except for clocks and time and temperature signs;
- d. Banners, pennants, flags (except as permitted by Sec. 8110-3e; no other flags are permitted);
- e. Captive balloons or signs which change color or appear to change color or where the intensity of light changes or appears to change, except on a temporary basis in accordance with Sec. 8110-6.11;
- f. Portable or trailer-mounted off-site advertising or tract signs;
- g. Any sign which emits sound;
- h. Any sign erected in such a manner that any portion of the sign or its support is attached to or will interfere with the free use of any fire escape, exit or standpipe, or will obstruct any stairway, door, ventilator or window;
- i. Projecting signs, unless suspended from a canopy in accordance with Sec. 8110-6.2, or attached to a service station canopy roof in accordance with Sec. 8110-6.9.1;
- j. Roof signs;
- k. Any sign or sign structure which is structurally unsafe or constitutes a hazard to health or safety by reason of design, inadequate maintenance or dilapidation;

- l. Any sign erected or attached to any tree or utility pole within any public right-of-way, or any sign erected within the boundaries of the required right-of-way for any mapped road as shown on the Circulation Element of the Ventura County General Plan;
- m. Any sign erected in such a manner that it will or may reasonably be expected to interfere with, obstruct, confuse or mislead traffic;
- n. The use of any item of merchandise or other commodity related to the business as a sign, except as such commodity may be permanently incorporated into a sign structure as permitted by this Article;
- o. Signs attached to the exterior surfaces of windows; (ADD. ORD. 3810 - 5/5/87);
- p. Off-site signs, except as specifically permitted in Sections 8110-5.1 and 8110-5.6. (ADD. ORD. 3810 - 5/5/87).

6. Sec. 8110-6.8 - Political Signs

The purpose of this section is to prevent damage to Public property, protect the integrity of the electoral process and prevent the erosion of aesthetic quality and historic values within the County. It is specifically recognized that if temporary political signs on private property are not removed after the election is held, the deteriorating signs and accumulating debris become a blight, defacing the landscape. It is therefore an intent of this Article to make provision for the erection and removal of such signs after the election which they publicized has been held.

7. Sec. 8110-6.8.3 - Location

Political signs may not be affixed, installed, or erected within 100 feet of a polling place or historic site, nor within the right of way of any highway, nor within 660 feet of the edge of a "Scenic Highway" or landscaped freeway, nor in any location where the sign will impair sight distance or create a hazard to traffic or pedestrians, nor on any telephone pole, lamppost, tree, wall, fence, bridge, bench, hydrant, curbstone, sidewalk or other structure in or upon any public right-of-way, nor upon any other public property. (AM. ORD. 3730 - 5/7/85; AM. ORD. 4216 - 10/24/00)

8. Sec 8110-6.8.4 - Time Frames

Temporary political signs shall not be posted sooner than 90 days prior to a scheduled election administered by the County Elections Department. Said signs shall be removed within 10 days after the election. (ADD. ORD. 4216 - 10/24/00)

9. Sec. 8110-6.8.5 - Enforcement

Except for signs remaining posted after the post-election deadline, any political sign not posted in accordance with the provisions of this Article shall be deemed to be a public nuisance and shall be subject to removal by the candidate, property owner, or, when a ballot proposition is involved, the authorized agent of the group or organization sponsoring the sign or, upon their failure to do so after reasonable attempt at notice by the County, by County officers or zoning inspectors. Any political sign which is not removed within the specified period following an election shall be subject to summary removal and confiscation by the County. (AM. ORD. 3730 - 5/7/85; AM. ORD. 4216 - 10/24/00)

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE (APPLICANT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVAL SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

Political Sign Registration May-2008

**Attachment 02**  
**City of Ventura Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

## **POLITICAL SIGNS**

The placement of political signs is subject to regulation by the City of San Buenaventura, County of Ventura, and State of California.

### **City Regulations**

#### **Temporary Political Sign**

Temporary political signs shall not be installed more than six months prior to any national election or more than three months prior to any other election, and shall be removed within ten days of the completion of the subject election. Temporary political signs identifying campaign headquarters shall not be subject to Sections 24.420.100 through 24.420.250. Temporary political signs located on private property shall have the permission of the property owner. Temporary political signs may be located in a public right-of-way, such as within treewells, sidewalks, or parkways but not within medians or roadways. No temporary political sign on private property or in a public right-of-way shall be located in a manner that may constitute a traffic hazard or create a hazardous condition for persons using the public right-of-way.

*(Excerpt from Municipal Code, Chapter 24.420.050, Paragraph 10)*

#### **Owner's Authorization**

It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to post, stick, stamp, paint or otherwise affix, or cause to be done by another, any notice, placard, bill, poster, or advertisement to or upon any sidewalk, crosswalk, curbing, hydrant, tree, fence, inclosure or building, or upon any telegraph, telephone, or electrical lighting pole, without first obtaining the permission of the owner, agent or occupant thereof.

*(Excerpt from Municipal Code, Section 18.220.010, Paragraph E)*

#### **Handbills**

It shall be unlawful for any persons, either directly or indirectly, to distribute, deposit, place, throw, scatter, or cast, any handbill in or upon any public thoroughfare, park, ground, or other public place within the city or upon any private yard, grounds, walk, porch, steps, mailbox, vestibule, house, residence, building, or any other private property.

*(Excerpt from Municipal Code, Section 18.220.010, Paragraph A)*

**Attachment 03**  
**City of Oxnard Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

## **POLITICAL SIGNS**

The placement of political signs is subject to regulation by the cities, county and state.

**CITY** In a further effort to make Oxnard more attractive, candidates and committees are requested to follow these guidelines for posting political signs:

1. Signs and bumper stickers should not be placed on public or private property without the owner's consent.
2. Signs and bumper stickers should not be placed so as to obstruct intersections, cover traffic signs, or otherwise constitute a safety hazard.
3. Signs and bumper stickers with adhesive backing should not be affixed to any structure.
4. Signs should be removed promptly within 10 days after the election.

Any inquires about political signs will be referred to the candidate by the City Clerk's Office.



**Attachment 04**  
**City of Camarillo Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

## CITY OF CAMARILLO SIGN REGULATIONS DURING ELECTION PERIODS AND OTHER TIMES

This handout summarizes the City of Camarillo's Sign Code<sup>1</sup> provisions regarding "noncommercial signs"<sup>2</sup> that may be posted with campaign or political messages. Some noncommercial signs are permitted at any time, and other sign opportunities are only provided during an "election period," which is defined as "the period commencing 90 days before any national, state, or local election in which city electors may vote up through the date of the election."<sup>3</sup>

### Temporary Noncommercial Sign Opportunities on a Parcel During an Election Period

<u>Residential Zones</u>	<u>Commercial Zones</u>	<u>Industrial &amp; Agriculture Zones</u>
8 temporary freestanding noncommercial signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 sq. ft. area/face</li> <li>• 4 feet max. height</li> <li>• Non-illuminated</li> <li>• Must be removed promptly after the election</li> </ul>	8 temporary freestanding noncommercial signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 sq. ft. area/face</li> <li>• No more than 4 feet high at the bottom of the sign</li> <li>• 10 feet maximum height</li> <li>• Non-illuminated</li> <li>• Must be removed promptly after the election</li> </ul>	8 temporary freestanding noncommercial signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 sq. ft. area/face</li> <li>• No more than 4 feet high at bottom of the sign</li> <li>• 10 feet maximum height</li> <li>• Non-illuminated</li> <li>• Must be removed promptly after the election</li> </ul>

The Sign Code also provides the following noncommercial sign opportunities at all times.

### Temporary Noncommercial Sign Opportunities on a Parcel at All Times

<u>Residential Zones</u>	<u>Commercial Zones</u>	<u>Industrial &amp; Agriculture Zones</u>
2 temporary freestanding noncommercial signs (which may be for campaign messages) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 sq. ft. area</li> <li>• 4 feet height</li> <li>• Non-illuminated</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
1 temporary window sign (which may be a noncommercial/campaign sign) is permitted on each building frontage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 sq. ft. in area or 25% of the window area of any single window, whichever is greater</li> </ul>	No more than 25% of the window area may be utilized for window signs, which may include noncommercial/campaign signs	1 temporary window sign (which may be a noncommercial/campaign sign) is permitted on each building frontage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 sq. ft. in area or 25% of the window area of any single window, whichever is greater</li> </ul>

In addition to the above opportunities, and subject to the consent of the property owner, a noncommercial message of any type may be substituted for all or part of the commercial or noncommercial message on any sign allowed under the City's Sign Code. No special or additional approval is required to substitute a noncommercial message for any other message on a

<sup>1</sup> Camarillo Municipal Code (CMC) Chapter 17.04.

<sup>2</sup> CMC §17.04.020 (Definitions) defines a "noncommercial sign" as "a sign that does not name, advertise or call attention of a commercial or industrial business, commodity, product, good, service or other commercial or industrial activity for a commercial or industrial purpose." This definition include signs with political or campaign messages.

<sup>3</sup> CMC §17.04.020.

CAM #4831-6922-0144 v3

permitted sign, provided the sign structure is already approved or exempt from the City's sign permit requirement and no structural or electrical change is made. (CMC §17.04.040.D.)

#### **General Time, Place and Manner Sign Code Regulations Affecting Noncommercial Signs**

Please note that:

- No sign may be placed or erected on private property without the full knowledge and consent of the lawful occupant or, if there is no lawful occupant, without the full knowledge and consent of the property owner. (CMC §17.04.040.B.)
- No sign may be placed in a manner that impedes, obstructs, denies or impairs the sight distance for safe pedestrian or vehicular traffic. If a residential property abuts a non-residential road, please make sure the sign is located on the private property and, if possible, set back at least 10 feet from the public road. (CMC §17.04.070.A.3; §17.04.130.M.)
- Signs may not be placed on any public property or in the public right-of-way, which includes, but is not limited to, any street, sidewalk, walkway, parkway, floodway, wall, or other city-owned structure. Signs also may not be posted in such a manner as to hang over or into a sidewalk or walkway area. (CMC §17.04.070.A.1.)
- Signs may not be attached to any other sign including any traffic sign or be posted in any way that would create a hazard for pedestrian or vehicular traffic. (CMC §17.04.130.M.)

Any sign not in compliance with the regulations above or other applicable provisions of the Camarillo Municipal Code may be removed by the City. Nothing prohibits the removal of any sign that is determined by the Public Works Director or Director of Community Development, or their designees, to be an immediate danger to persons or property. Additionally, any sign may be removed with the property owner's authorization. (CMC §17.04.140.) If a sign is removed by the City, it will be stored in the Community Development Department at City Hall. It is the candidate's responsibility to reclaim the sign.

If you have any questions, you can contact Elena in the Code Enforcement Division at (805) 383-5660.

**Attachment 05**  
**City of Thousand Oaks Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

## **POLITICAL SIGNS**

City Council Candidates may elect to use campaign signs to promote their candidacy. The City asks that each candidate keep in mind the best interests of the community through compliance with the following excerpts from the Thousand Oaks Municipal Code for placing campaign signs. The City's desire is to maintain an aesthetically pleasing appearance in the City, while providing sufficient opportunity for each candidate to increase voter awareness.

### **Excerpts from the Thousand Oaks Municipal Code**

**Definition:** A sign erected prior to an election to advise or identify a candidate, campaign issue, election proposition, or other related matters. [TOMC §9-4.2303]

**Timing:** Political Signs cannot be displayed sooner than (45) days before Election Day and must be removed no later than (7) days after election. [TOMC §9-4.2304(d)]

**Unauthorized Removal of Signs:** No person shall remove, destroy, relocate or otherwise disturb any political sign without the permission of the party who erected the sign. It shall be presumed, as to signs for political candidates, that the political candidate or his or her representative is the party who erected the sign. It shall further be assumed that the committee who has registered with the Secretary of the State to support a position on a ballot proposition is the party who erected the sign taking the position on a ballot measure. This subsection shall not prohibit the owner of a piece of property, or authorized representative, from removing a sign from property when the sign has been erected without consent; and provided, nothing in this subsection shall prevent the Thousand Oaks Community Development Director or authorized representative from taking action to abate sign violations pertaining to political signs pursuant to TOMC §9-4.2304(e). [TOMC §9-4.2304(f)]

**Permitted Zones:** Residential, trailer park development, commercial and industrial zones, per the following: [TOMC §9-4.2305, 9-4.2306, 9-4.2307, 9-4.2308 and 9-4.2309]

**Size Requirements:** Temporary political signs shall be permitted and shall not exceed twelve (12') square feet in area and six (6') feet in visible height. [As outlined in Permitted Zones.]

**Placement:** One political sign per candidate or position on a ballot issue shall be displayed on any one side of a parcel of record having frontage on a public street.

However, if the parcel has frontage along two public streets, two signs are permitted, one along each frontage---provided the distance between the two signs is not closer than 100 feet. [TOMC §9-4.2309(v)]

Political signs identifying more than one candidate qualify as a sign for each candidate. Therefore, candidates identified on a joint political sign are not permitted to place any other sign on a parcel fronting the same public street.

Political signs are permitted on existing advertising and/or directional signs of NEW subdivisions in residential zones. Political signs are permitted on existing off-site free standing signs in commercial and industrial zones. [TOMC §9-4.2306(a)(11) and 9-4.2309(v)]

Political signs may **not** be attached to real estate advertising signs, placed on public property or in public right of ways. [TOMC §9-4.2309(w)(3)(vi), 9-4.2309(v), and §9-4.2305]

The entire Municipal Code may be viewed online at:

[http://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/thousand-oaks\\_ca/](http://www.amlegal.com/codes/client/thousand-oaks_ca/)

**Attachment 06**  
**City of Simi Valley Campaign Sign-Placement Policy**

### SIGN PROCEDURES

#### *City of Simi Valley Sign Regulations*

- The placement of political signs is subject to regulation by the City, the County, and the State of California.
- This information is provided as a courtesy to all candidates for public office who may post temporary signs within the City of Simi Valley in connection with the November 2016 Election.
- Temporary, non-commercial signs, including political signs, are regulated under Simi Valley Municipal Code §9-37.070 (Temporary Sign Standards).

<b>Election signs may be posted beginning:</b>	<b>Friday, September 9</b>
<b>Election signs must be removed by:</b>	<b>Tuesday, November 15</b>

- A permit is not required for non-commercial signs, but the following standards must be met:
  - **Signs are allowed in all zones for no more than 60 days prior to, and including the day of, the election and must be removed within 7 days after the date of the election.**
  - Freestanding signs must be no more than 12 square feet in size and shall not exceed a height of six feet, including the framework supporting the sign.
  - Signs are not allowed to be located in the public rights-of-way and will be removed without notice. This includes medians, parkways, and easements. If you believe City staff has abated your sign and you wish to retrieve the sign, please contact the Public Services Center at (805) 583-6400 within 14 days of abatement. After 14 days, all abated signs are discarded.
  - Signs may only be placed on private property with the permission of the property owner or their designee.
  - Signs placed on private property are required to include identification/contact information for the sign owner (candidate or campaign representative) affixed in the lower right hand corner of the sign or incorporated in the sign graphics. The required information includes name, address, and telephone number for the candidate/campaign representative. As an alternative, address information may be maintained on file with the organization, the individual, the campaign office, or the County of Ventura Elections Division and made easily accessible if verification of sign ownership is requested.



- Signs placed on commercial/industrial private property and residential vacant lots are required to have property owner permission and must have the property owner's name and phone number affixed to the lower right hand corner of the sign. As an alternative, the property owner's authorized representative (property manager or leaseholder) may provide permission for the sign placement and "Property Owner Permission on File" may be affixed to the sign instead of the owner's name and telephone number, provided that the contact information is maintained on file with the organization, the individual or the campaign office and made easily accessible if verification of property owner permission is requested.
- The property owner name and phone number is not required to be posted on election signs placed on single-family residential properties, since it is implied that the property owner is giving permission by the act of posting the sign in the front of their home on their property.
- Signs may not be placed on utility poles, fencing, trees, shrubs, railroad crossings, or lighting systems.
- Portable signs are prohibited.
- When Code Enforcement verifies a sign complaint on private property, verbal notification will be given to the candidate or campaign headquarters (the contact identified by the candidate) to correct the sign violation(s) within a 24-hour notification period.
  - If the sign violation is abated, no further Code Enforcement action will take place.
  - If the violation is not abated within the 24-hour notification, or if after being notified of the sign regulations there are repeat sign violations of the same nature on private property or in the public rights-of-way, Code Enforcement will proceed with additional action, which may include abating the sign and charging the candidate/campaign representative for all costs associated with the abatement in accordance with the Simi Valley Municipal Code, and additional civil or legal action may be taken up to and including criminal prosecution for repeat violations.
- Please be advised that Section 9-37.070.E of the Simi Valley Municipal Code prohibits the unauthorized removal or destruction of lawfully placed temporary signs.
- Section 9-37.090 of the Simi Valley Municipal Code addresses enforcement of violations of Chapter 9-37.
- The City of Simi Valley Temporary Sign Responsibility Form can be found on page 17.



September 1, 2016

Dear Candidate:

This letter is being sent as a courtesy to all candidates for public office who may post temporary signs within the City of Simi Valley in connection with the November 2016 Presidential and General Election. In an effort to ensure that your signs comply with the City's Municipal Code, I encourage you to review Chapter 37 of the Simi Valley Municipal Code, which regulates non-commercial temporary signs, including election signs. The following summarizes some of the regulations pertinent to election signs during this campaign season, and an illustrative flyer is included to assist in understanding these regulations. A permit is not required for non-commercial signs, however the following standards must be met:

- Freestanding signs must be no more than 12 square feet in size and shall not exceed a height of six feet, including the framework supporting the sign.
- Signs are not allowed to be located in the public rights-of-way and will be removed without notice. This includes medians, parkways, and easements. If you believe City staff has abated your sign and you wish to retrieve the sign, please contact the Public Services Center at (805) 583-6400 within 14 days of abatement. After 14 days, all abated signs are discarded.
- Signs are allowed in all zones for no more than 60 days prior to, and including the day of, the election and must be removed within 7 days after the date of the election.
- Signs may only be placed on private property with the permission of the property owner or their designee.
- Signs placed on private property are required to include identification/contact information for the sign owner (candidate or campaign representative) affixed in the lower right hand corner of the sign or incorporated in the sign graphics. The required information includes name, address, and telephone number for the candidate/campaign representative. As an alternative, address information may be maintained on file with the organization, the individual, the campaign office, or the County of Ventura Elections Division and made easily accessible if verification of sign ownership is requested.
- Signs placed on commercial/industrial private property and residential vacant lots are required to have property owner permission and must have the property owner's name and phone number affixed to the lower right hand corner of the sign. As an alternative, the property owner's authorized representative (property manager or leaseholder) may provide permission for the sign placement and "Property Owner Permission on File" may be affixed to the sign instead of the owner's name and telephone number, provided that the contact information is maintained on file with the organization, the individual or the campaign office and made easily accessible if verification of property owner permission is requested.

Bob Huber, Mayor   Keith L. Mashburn, Mayor Pro Tem   Glen T. Becerra, Council Member   Steven T. Sojka, Council Member   Mike Judge, Council Member

2929 Tapo Canyon Road, Simi Valley, CA 93063-2199   805.583.6700   [www.simivalley.org](http://www.simivalley.org)



- The property owner name and phone number is not required to be posted on election signs placed on single-family residential properties, since it is implied that the property owner is giving permission by the act of posting the sign in the front of their home on their property.
- Signs may not be placed on utility poles, fencing, trees, shrubs, railroad crossings, or lighting systems.
- Portable signs are prohibited.

When Code Enforcement verifies a sign complaint on private property, verbal notification will be given to the candidate or campaign headquarters (the contact identified by the candidate) to correct the sign violation(s) within a 24-hour notification period. If the sign violation is abated, no further Code Enforcement action will take place. If the violation is not abated within the 24-hour notification or if after being notified of the sign regulations there are repeat sign violations of the same nature on private property or in the public rights-of-way, Code Enforcement will proceed with additional action, which may include abating the sign and charging the candidate/campaign representative for all costs associated with the abatement in accordance with the Simi Valley Municipal Code, and additional civil or legal action may be taken up to and including criminal prosecution for repeat violations.

Please be advised that Section 9-37.070.E of the Simi Valley Municipal Code prohibits the unauthorized removal or destruction of lawfully placed temporary signs. Section 9-37.090 of the Simi Valley Municipal Code addresses enforcement of violations of Chapter 9-37.

Enclosed you will find the City's Statement of Responsibility Form for Temporary Political Signs. Please complete this form and send it back to the City Clerk's Office at your earliest convenience.

Questions regarding the City's sign requirements and enforcement should be directed to Kevin Murphy at (805) 583-6319 or Nancy Cole at (805) 583-6386 in the Community Services Department. A copy of Simi Valley Municipal Code Chapter 9-37 (Signs) is available on the City's website, [www.simivalley.org](http://www.simivalley.org) or at the City Clerk's Office, (805) 583-6748.

Your attention to this matter is appreciated.

Respectfully,



Ky Spangler  
Deputy Director/City Clerk

Encl.

cc: City Manager  
City Attorney  
Director of Environmental Services  
Director of Community Services  
Director of Public Works  
Deputy Director/City Planner  
Deputy City Manager  
Code Enforcement Manager

# 2016 General Election Candidate's Guide to Placing Campaign Signs in Simi Valley

Campaign signs may be posted on private property beginning Friday, September 9, 2016.

All signs must be removed no later than Tuesday, November 15, 2016.

The following information is required on signs:



Sign must be 12 square feet or less.

## Identification

Name, telephone number, and address of the candidate or the campaign's telephone number and address affixed to the sign or incorporated in the sign's graphics or candidate contact information can be on file where City staff can access it.

## Permission

Signs must have property owner permission to be posted on private property, and the phrase, "Property owner permission on file" must be affixed to the sign or the property owner's name or authorized representative's name and telephone number must be on the sign.

The identification requirements are not required to be affixed to the sign if the sign is posted on single family residential property. However, **no signs are allowed to be posted in medians or anywhere in the parkway areas (public right-of-way).**

## Prohibited Signs:

- Signs in public rights-of-way
- Portables or A-frame signs
- Signs that are attached to other signs, landscaping, fencing, or utility poles, or lighting systems
- Signs over 12 square feet
- Signs higher than six feet
- Signs on private property without property owner or authorized representative's permission

