

Political Signs

Political signs may be placed only on private property with the permission of the Property owner.

It is unlawful to post signs on any city – owned property, as well as the public Right-of-way. The right-of-way generally extends to one foot behind a sidewalk, 10 feet behind a curb or 12 feet behind the pavement edge.

Also, it is against the law to post signs on median strips in the streets or on utility poles, street signs, traffic signs, or on bus-stop signs.

Candidates and their supporters are encouraged to remove all signs as soon after the election as possible.

Please refer to the attached guidelines for specific information regarding political signs. Also, questions concerning the placement and size of signs may be directed to the Zoning Inspector's Office at 516-2555.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**CITY OF RALEIGH
POLITICAL SIGN REGULATIONS**

Residential Zoning Districts:

- (1) Signs may not exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area and three and one-half (3 1/2) feet in height.
- (2) No premise (subdivided lot) may contain more than sixty (60) square feet of such signage.

Commercial Zoning Districts:

A: Developed property:

- (1) Political signs are treated as information signs and may not exceed six (6) square feet in area and three and one-half (3 1/2) feet in height.
- (2) No premise (subdivided lot) may contain more than thirty-two (32) square feet of information signage.

B. Undeveloped property:

- (1) No sign may exceed thirty (32) square feet in area and fifteen (15) feet in height.
- (2) No premise (subdivided lot) may contain more than sixty (60) square feet of such signage.

In no case may any political sign be placed on any public right-of-way or any utility pole. Signs placed on a public right-of-way will be removed and violators may be subject to penalties in the amount of \$100.00 and a \$100.00 administrative fee for each sign found in violation of the regulations. Continuing violations are \$500 per day per location.

If you have questions regarding these or other sign regulations you may contact: Robert Pearce, Zoning Inspector, 516-2558.

RE: Applicable City Sign Regulations.

The following are portions of pertinent portions of the Raleigh City Code.

Section 10-2083.1

(e) Noncommercial Copy Permitted.

Any *sign* authorized in this chapter is allowed to contain noncommercial *copy* in lieu of any other *copy*.

Annotation: Major Media of the Southeast v. Raleigh, 792 F. 2d 1269 at 1272-3 (4th Cir. 1986), Cert denied, 107 S. Ct. 1334, 94 L. Ed., 2d 185 (1987), Aff'g 621 F. Supp. 1446 (E.D.N.C. 1985). The term noncommercial copy is not vague, and this regulation does not treat commercial speech more favorably than noncommercial speech. Therefore, there is no violation of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

(f) Construction Standards.

(1) Compliance with Building Code.

All *signs* shall comply with the appropriate provisions of the North Carolina State and City Building Codes, the National Electric Code, and other provisions of the Code of the City of Raleigh.

(h) Maximum Signage.

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Notwithstanding this maximum allowable signage limitation, no *premise*, including those in *residential districts*, is prevented from having at least thirty-two (32) square feet of *on-premise signage*. Allowable signage *may* be allocated among the permitted *signs* in the district provided that, the applicable sign regulations in §10-2083.3 are met, and further provided that the total signage allowed herein is not exceeded.

(i) Miscellaneous (Omnibus) Signs.

Each *premises* which is not allowed to contain either a *wall sign* or an *on-premises sign* or *off-premises ground sign* is allowed to contain a maximum amount of signage of sixty (60) square feet, provided that, no *sign* is more than fifteen (15) square feet in size and three and one-half (3 1/2) feet in height.

Section 10-2083.2.

[Product and Information Signs.]

Product signs and information signs shall meet all of the following standards:

(1) A *product sign or information sign* may not exceed six (6) square feet in area, except in the case of *information signs* for a *multi-establishment campus*. Individual *information signs* for any *multi-establishment campus* may be a maximum of fourteen (14) square feet in area with a maximum height of three-and-one-half (1/2) feet and a maximum width of four (4) feet; further, one (1) primary *information sign* may be located at each major entrance; provided that, no such sign shall be closer than one hundred (100) feet to the public right-of-way, and not exceed a maximum of thirty-five (35) square feet in area, a maximum height of seven (7) feet, and a maximum width of five (5) feet.

(2) The total area of sign for all *product and information signs* located on any *premise* does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet; provided that the total allowable sign area for *information signs* which are part of a *multi-establishment campus* may be increased in accordance with the following:

a. Thirty-two (32) square feet per major entrance drive for any *multi-establishment campus* with three (3) or more major entrances from a commercial street meeting City standards or a *thoroughfare*; and

b. Ten (10) square feet for each acre in excess of ten (10) acres of the *multi-establishment campus*.

(3) No commercial message, *copy*, announcement, or decoration is located on the *information sign* other than instruction or direction to the public.

(4) The *product sign* is attached directly to either the ~~dissemination~~ structure or the product and is not located in any *residential district*.

(5) An *information sign* when located in a *residential district* is located on the same premises as a *residential institution*.

Section 10-2083.3.

PROHIBITED SIGNS.

The following *signs* are expressly prohibited within all zoning districts:

- (1) Any *sign* which the Director of Transportation determines obstructs the view of bicyclists or motorists using any street, private driveway, approach to any *street* intersection, or which interferes with the effectiveness of or obscures any traffic *sign*, device, or signal.
- (2) Illuminated, highly reflective *signs*, or spotlights which the Director of Transportation determines hampers the vision of motorists or bicyclists.
- (3) *Signs*, lights, rotating disks, words, and other devices which resemble traffic signals, traffic *signs*, or emergency vehicle lights.
- (4) *Signs*, lights, rotating disks, words, and other devices not erected by public authority which may be erroneously construed as governmental *signs* or emergency warning *signs*.
- (5) Any *sign* which interferes with free passage from or obstructs any fire escape, downspout, window, door, stairways, ladder, or opening intended as a means of ingress or egress or providing light or air.
- (6) Any *sign* placed on any curb, sidewalk, post pole, hydrant, bridge, tree, or other surface located on, over, or across any public *street*, right-of-way, *property* or *thoroughfare*, unless authorized by the *City Council*.
- (7) Any newly created *flashing signs*, travelling lights, or *signs* animated by lights or changing degrees of intensity, except *signs* in public rights-of-way.
- (8) Any newly erected *sign* which mechanically moves except _____ public rights-of-way.
- (9) Any newly erected roof *sign*.
- (10) The tacking, posting, or otherwise affixing of *signs* of a miscellaneous character visible from a public way located on the outside walls of *buildings*, barns, sheds, trees, poles, fences, or other structures provided unit number identification *signs* authorized by this chapter, mailbox and paper tube identification *signs* which do not exceed one (1) square foot in area, and *signs* which warn the public against danger shall be allowed.

(11) Any newly *erected* message, *copy* or announcement, which uses a series of two (2) or more *signs* placed in a line parallel to a *street*, highway, or expressway carrying a single message, *copy*, or announcement part of which is contained on each *sign*.

(12) Any *sign* which pertains to a business, profession, commodity, or service which is vacant, unoccupied, or discontinued for a period of one (1) *year* or more; any part of a sign which is *unused* for a period of one (1) *year* or more; or any *sign* which pertains to an event or purpose which no longer applies *shall* be deemed abandoned. An abandoned *sign* is prohibited and *shall* be removed by the *owner* of the *sign* or the *owner* or tenant of the *premise*.

(13) Any *sign* unlawfully *erected* or maintained.

State law reference: Unlawful posting and advertising G.S.14-145.