

**2010  
POLITICAL  
SIGN  
REGULATIONS**

**CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**Includes:**

**City of Battle Ground**

**City of Camas**

**City of Washougal**

**City of La Center**

**City of Vancouver**

**Clark County**

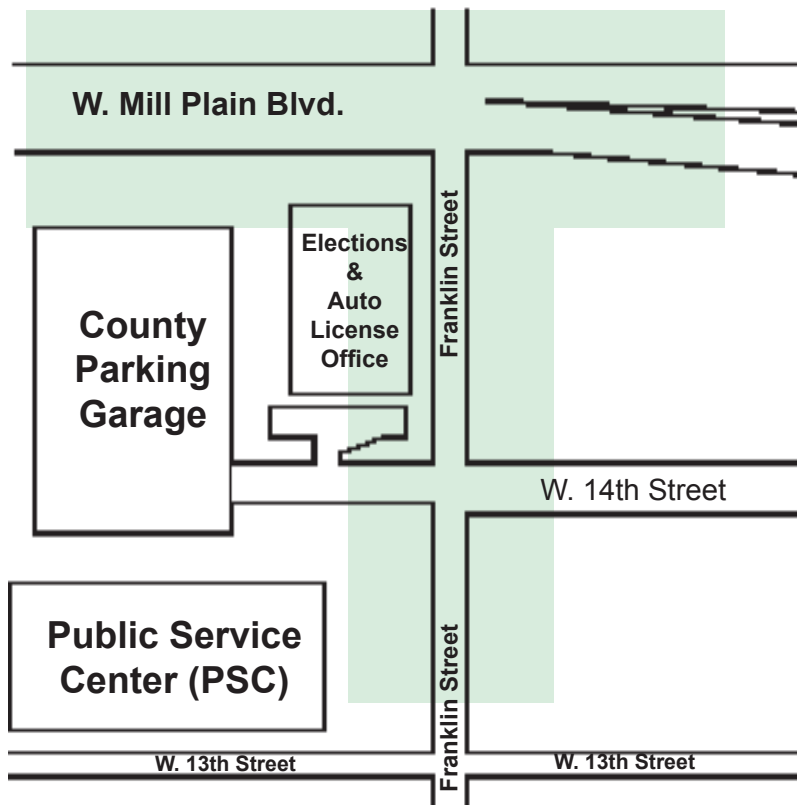
**Washington Dept. of Transportation**

## INTRODUCTION

Washington State law prohibits campaign signs from being placed within 300 feet of the entrance to a polling place.

With the change to all mail ballot voting, the Elections Office is Clark County's only polling place. Campaign signs should not be placed within 300 feet of the Elections Office. The diagram below illustrates the area near the Elections Office where campaign signs should not be placed.

### ***Twenty Day No Campaign Sign Zone (300 feet from Elections Office entrances - shaded area)***



# POLITICAL SIGN REGULATIONS

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## CITY OF BATTLE GROUND

The City of Battle Ground's Sign Ordinance identifies election-oriented signage as temporary signage, which are generally exempt from signage regulations and standards specified in Battle Ground Municipal Code Section 17.139. Therefore, the installation of election oriented signage does not require prior approval from the City before they are installed. However, any election-oriented signage should not be located within the public right-of-way, and should be located on private property with the property owner's authorization. Any election-oriented signage that is located within the public right-of-way will be removed.

Further questions regarding signage regulations in the City of Battle Ground should be directed to Dorothy Harrington, Planning Technician at 360-342-5041.

### **Chapter 17.139: Signs**

Subsection 040.27.C. Temporary, "temporary sign" means any sign or advertising display constructed of cloth, wood, canvas, light fabric, paper or other materials with or without frames intended to be displayed for a limited time only as determined by the planning director and not permanently mounted. Temporary signs include special event signs that advertise civic events such as street fairs, community festivals, parades, farmer's markets, charity benefits, signs attached to external window surfaces and that are readily removable, lettering or symbols painted directly onto or flush mounted magnetically onto an operable vehicle, garage sale signs, pennants, reasonable temporary and seasonal decorations, sign sandwich boards, construction signs, election-oriented political signs and new business/location signs or other such similar signs as determined by the Planning Director.

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## CITY OF CAMAS

### *Political Signs -*

Camas Municipal Code **18.15.170 Temporary signs - Permit exemptions.**

A. Definition. "Temporary sign" shall mean a sign that is used in connection with a circumstance, situation, or event that is designed, intended or expected to take place or to be completed within a reasonably short or definite period after erection of such sign; or is intended to remain on the location where it is erected or placed for a period of not more than fifteen (15) days. Temporary signs include, but are not limited to, political signs advocating political candidates or political issues, real estate signs advertising property for sale or lease, construction signs identifying the builder of a structure or the developer of a

residential, commercial or industrial development, special event signs advertising grand openings, fairs, carnivals, circuses, festivals, or community events, garage or yard sale signs, and any other sign of a similar purpose.

Temporary signs shall not require a permit, and shall not be counted toward limitations in total sign area and numbers of signs as provided elsewhere in this chapter.

B. Number Limitations. There shall be no more than one temporary sign per lot per candidate, issue or event. For purposes of this section, two identical signs that are placed back to back as so to be viewable from opposite directions shall constitute one sign.

C. Size Limitations. Temporary signs shall not exceed six square feet in all residential zoning districts. Temporary signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in all other zoning districts.

D. Removal. Temporary signs shall be removed within fourteen (14) days after occurrence of the event. Political signs should therefore be removed within fourteen (14) days following an election, real estate signs should be removed within fourteen (14) days following sale or lease of the property, construction signs should be removed within fourteen (14) days following issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy for the building, special event signs should be removed within fourteen (14) days after occurrence of the special event, and yard and garage sale signs should be removed within fourteen (14) days following the sale.

E. Public Right-of-way. Privately maintained right-of-way shall mean that portion of the public right-of-way maintained by the abutting property owner. Publicly maintained right-of-way shall mean that portion of the public right-of-way maintained by the City of Camas or other public agency. No temporary signs shall be placed in privately maintained right-of-ways without the consent of the abutting property owner. No temporary sign shall be placed in a vision clearance area, or at any location in a public right-of-way where it presents a traffic hazard or other threat to human safety.

#### **18.17.030 Vision clearance area.**

A. On all corner lots no vehicle, fence, wall, hedge or other obstructive structure or planting at maturity shall impede visibility between a height of forty-two inches and ten feet above the sidewalk or fourteen feet above the street. See Figure 18.17.030-2.

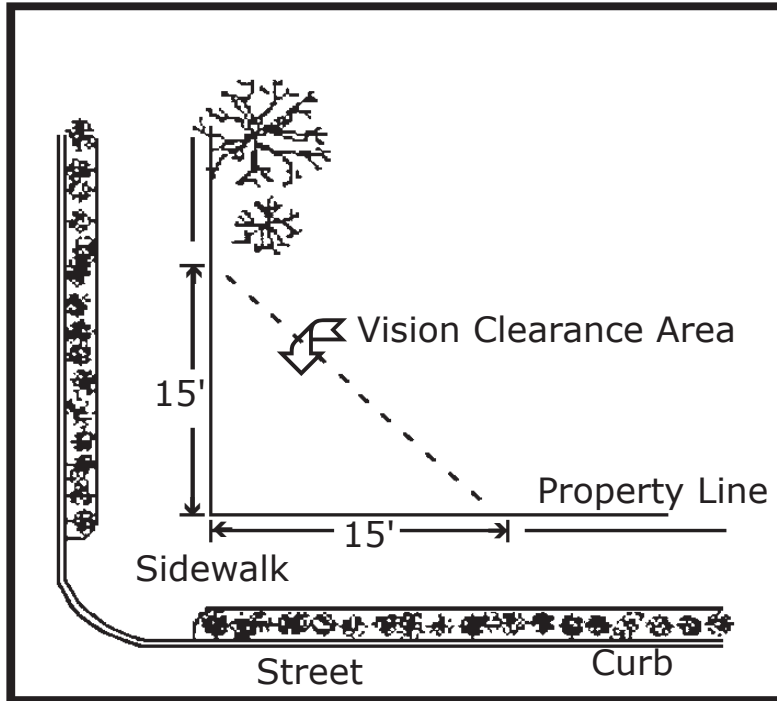


Figure 18.17.030-1 Vision Clearance

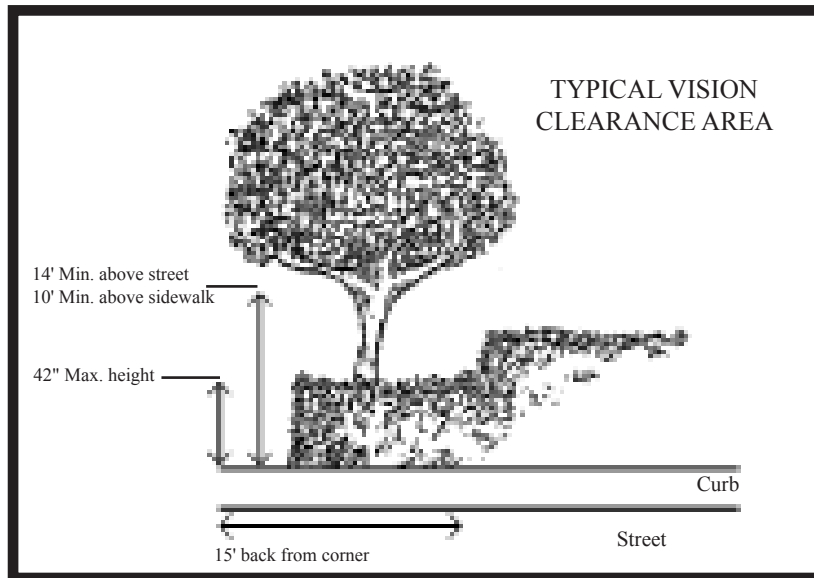


Figure 18.17.030-2 Vision Clearance Area

B. The triangular area shall be formed by measuring fifteen feet along both street property lines beginning at their point of intersection. The third side of the triangle shall be a line connecting the end points of the first two sides of the triangle. See figure 18.17.030-1 and 18.17.030-2.

**CITY OF WASHOUGAL**

**CITY OF WASHOUGAL  
POLITICAL SIGN PLACEMENT**

**NAME OF PERSON RUNNING FOR OFFICE OR REFERENDUM NUMBER:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICANT:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of signs to be placed within the city? \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSON REMOVING SIGNS (If not the same as APPLICANT):**  
**(Signs shall be removed within 10 days following the election to which such sign is directed)**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval by the Community Development Director:**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



## POLITICAL SIGN CRITERIA

“**Political** sign” means a sign which announces, promotes or advertises the name, program or political party of any candidate for public office, or an opinion regarding a public referendum regarding some political issue in an upcoming election.

“On-premises sign” means a sign which carries only advertisements strictly related to a lawful use by the occupant of the premises on which it is located, including signs or sign devices indicating the business transacted, services rendered, goods sold or produced on the premises, name of the business, and name of the person, firm or corporation occupying the premises. “On-premises sign” also means a sign, which contains religious, **political**, social and other noncommercial messages.

**Political** signs shall not exceed one per abutting street on any given lot. Signs shall be removed within 10 days following the election to which such sign is directed.

Sight lines for the safe travel of vehicles and to traffic control devices (signs, signals, etc.) shall not be obscured by **political** signs.

## **CITY OF LA CENTER**

The City of La Center has a section of city municipal code dedicated to the placement and usage of signs within the City. Sign information is located in Section 18.275 of the municipal code. For more information concerning political sign requirements in La Center, please contact the City of La Center by calling 360-263-2484 or by visiting City Hall at 214 East 4th Street, La Center. The full text of city municipal code, including all specific requirements for signs is also available on the La Center City website at:  
<http://www.ci.lacenter.wa.us/>

Look under La Center Municipal Code.

La Center Municipal Code

Title 18 DEVELOPMENT CODE

Chapter 18.275 SIGN REQUIREMENTS



March 1, 2010

Dear Candidates and Committee Members:

Every political season generates considerable citizen comment regarding the number, construction and placement of political signs during election campaigns. I am writing to familiarize you with Vancouver's sign regulations and policies regarding political signs. I am also writing to urge you to make a voluntary pledge to comply with a program to minimize the visual blight that the political season can engender, especially in some of Vancouver's most beautiful and historic areas.

Vancouver sign regulations prohibit the following:

- Posting of any signs on trees, structures or installations upon a public street. This includes no posting of signs on telephone poles, utility cabinets, fire hydrants, streetlights, or parking meters.
- Posting of any signs on any property (including abutting parking strips) without the consent of the owner or owner's agent.
- Posting of any signs on City owned or leased property without the consent of the City. (See the attached policy regarding "Political Signs on City Property".)
- Placement of any sight obscuring object, including but not limited to signs, within any required yard area between 30 inches and 10 feet above the street grade within the triangular vision clearance area as shown in the attached diagrams.
- Signs and sign support structures that are not constructed to resist being overturned by wind.

I believe that there is widespread community support to go beyond these minimum legal requirements to keep Vancouver's street rights-of-way and public areas free of the clutter of unlimited political signs. You are also no doubt aware of court decisions which limit the ability of the City to limit this unsightly clutter along our City streets.

We are therefor requesting all candidates, promoters and opponents of ballot measures and their campaign committees to voluntarily pledge to abide by Vancouver's voluntary guidelines for political signs and to keep political signs out of the street rights-of-way, especially in Vancouver's most scenic and historic areas. Enclosed is a diagram illustrating recommended sign placement along rights-of-way. We ask that no signs be placed in historic or scenic areas such as Officer's Row and Vancouver's National Historic Reserve.

Also enclosed is a pledge form we are asking you to sign as your promise to Vancouver and its citizens that you will abide by these voluntary guidelines. Please file this form with the City Clerk's Office, 610 Esther Street, Vancouver, Washington, 98660.

If you have any questions, please call Richard Landis, City Manager's Office, at 360-487-8615 or visit his office at 210 E. 13th St., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



PAT MCDONNELL  
City Manager

Encl: Political Sign Guidelines  
Pledge Form  
Voluntary Compliance Guideline Diagram  
Triangular Vision Clearance Area Diagrams  
Vision Clearance Requirement for Private Driveways  
WSDOT Letter re: Signs on Overpass

c: Carrie Lewellen, Deputy City Clerk  
Richard Landis, City Manager's Office

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# **City of Vancouver Political Campaign Sign**

## **Regulations and Guidelines**

### **City Ordinances prohibit:**

- Posting of any signs on trees, structures or installations upon a public street. This includes no posting of signs on telephone poles, utility cabinets, fire hydrants, streetlights, or parking meters.
- Posting of any signs on any property (including abutting parking strips) without the consent of the owner or owner's agent.
- Posting of any signs on City owned or leased property without the consent of the City. (See "Political Signs on City Property" below.)
- Placement of any sight obscuring object, including but not limited to signs, within any required yard area between 30 inches and 10 feet above the street grade within the triangular vision clearance area as shown in the attached diagrams.
- Signs and sign support structures that are not constructed to resist being overturned by wind.

### **Political signs on City Property:**

RCW 42.17.130 provides that public facilities may not be used, directly or indirectly, for the purpose of assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition.

In keeping with this prohibition and city ordinance, political signs may not be posted or placed on any City owned or leased property except as follows:

- As part of a political demonstration or similar political event held in a traditional public forum on City owned or leased property. These locations would include those portions of City parks or other City properties which are traditional public forums. (E.g. The plaza in front of City Hall.) This would not include any City building or facility that is not a traditional public forum, such as the interior of City Hall, Marshall Center, and other City offices and work facilities.
- To identify or direct participants to a political function in a rented City facility which is generally made available by the City on a content-neutral basis to private or non-profit entities - e.g. rented meeting or banquet rooms at Luepke Center, Marshall Center or Firstenburg Center. Signs shall be subject to the terms of any lease or use agreement for the specific facility and shall bear a notation stating that the event is not sponsored or endorsed by the City of Vancouver.

## **Voluntary Candidate Guidelines:**

The City of Vancouver believes, based on citizen comments, that there is widespread community support for minimizing the clutter of political signs in the public right of way. Citizens generally comment that a proliferation of signs obstructs their view of traffic and pedestrians at intersections, makes the community look cluttered and interferes with public travel and convenience when they walk or must maneuver to avoid signs posted in parking strips.

In addition to compliance with the City ordinances and state laws described above, the City of Vancouver asks for the voluntary commitment of candidates, supporters and opponents of ballot measures, and their campaign committees to follow these guidelines:

- To employ best efforts to ensure that political signs will not be placed in street rights-of-way, and in particular those on or near:
  - Parking strips in areas where members of the public enter and exit vehicles.
  - Scenic or historical areas such as Officers' Row, the Vancouver National Historic Reserve area, and City parks and recreation areas. (Those areas of the Reserve which are federal property are governed by different regulations and questions regarding such regulation should be directed to the Department of Defense or National Park Service).
- To employ best efforts to avoid displaying political signs that resemble traffic control devices.
- To employ best efforts to remove political signs from street rights-of-way within fifteen (15) days after the election. (E.g. by making certain that your campaign committee has a master key map of locations and a schedule for picking up signs.)

Attached is a pledge form, which the City asks candidates, committee members, and promoters or opponents of ballot propositions to sign as a voluntary agreement to abide by these guidelines. Please fill out this form and forward it to the City Clerk's Office.

If you have any questions, please call Richard Landis at the City Manager's Office, 360-487-8615, or visit their office at 210 E. 13th Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Vancouver, Wa. Thank you.

H:\PoliticalSignGuidelines\regulations and guidelines\2010

To: City Clerk's Office  
610 Esther Street  
PO Box 1995  
Vancouver WA 98668

File No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

## Voluntary Pledge to Comply with Vancouver Political Signs Guidelines

WE THE UNDERSIGNED, hereby voluntarily pledge to comply with the City of Vancouver political sign guidelines.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of signs: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PERSON RUNNING FOR OFFICE OR BALLOT MEASURE:

\_\_\_\_\_

### PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR REMOVAL OF SIGNS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

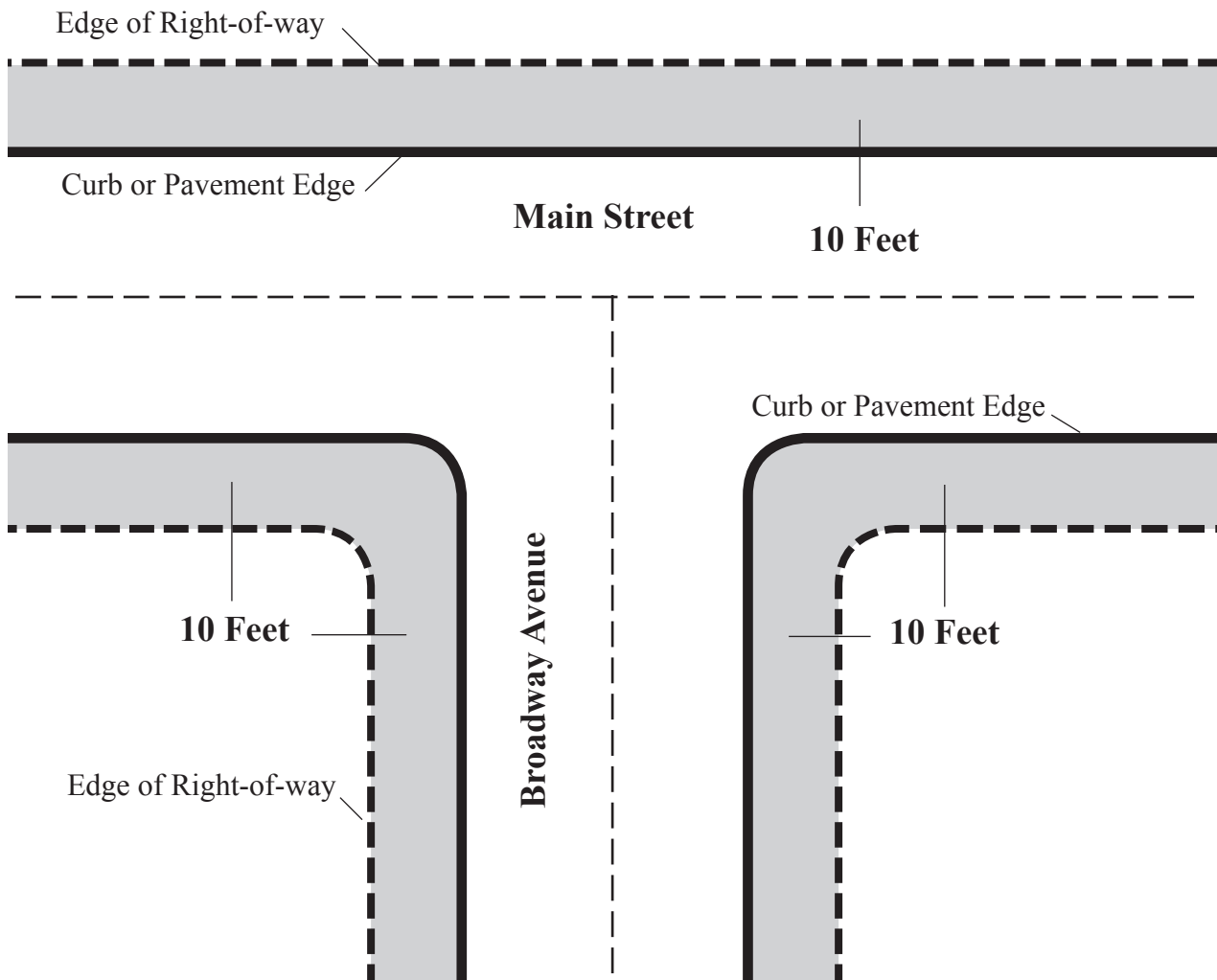
Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2010.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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**CITY OF VANCOUVER**  
**Voluntary Compliance Guideline Diagram**

*Please do not place signs within the shaded areas.*

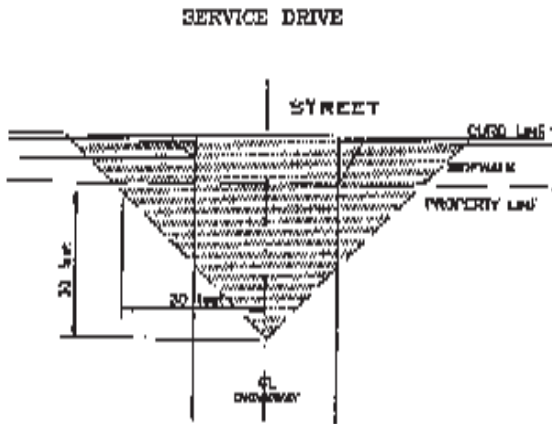
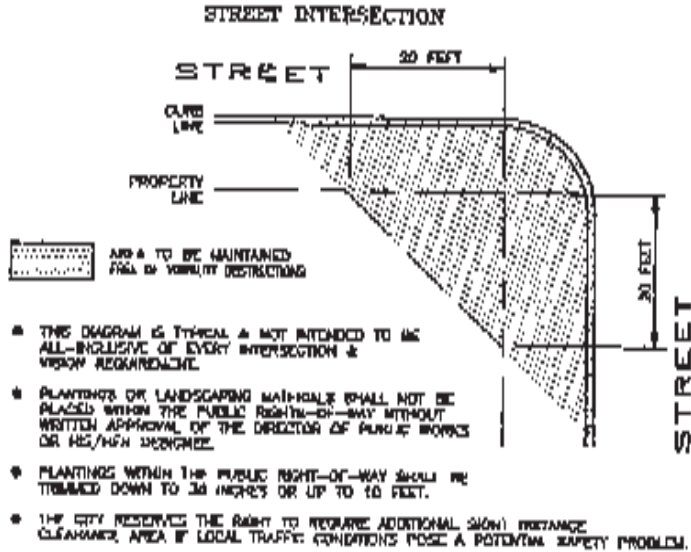


# CITY OF VANCOUVER

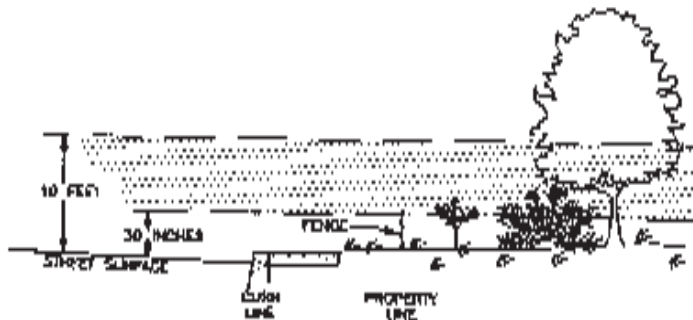
## Triangular Vision Clearance Area Diagrams

VMC 20.985.020 disallows any sight obstruction at a street intersection or service drive interfering with the view of the operation of motor vehicles on the streets to such an extent as to constitute a traffic hazard.

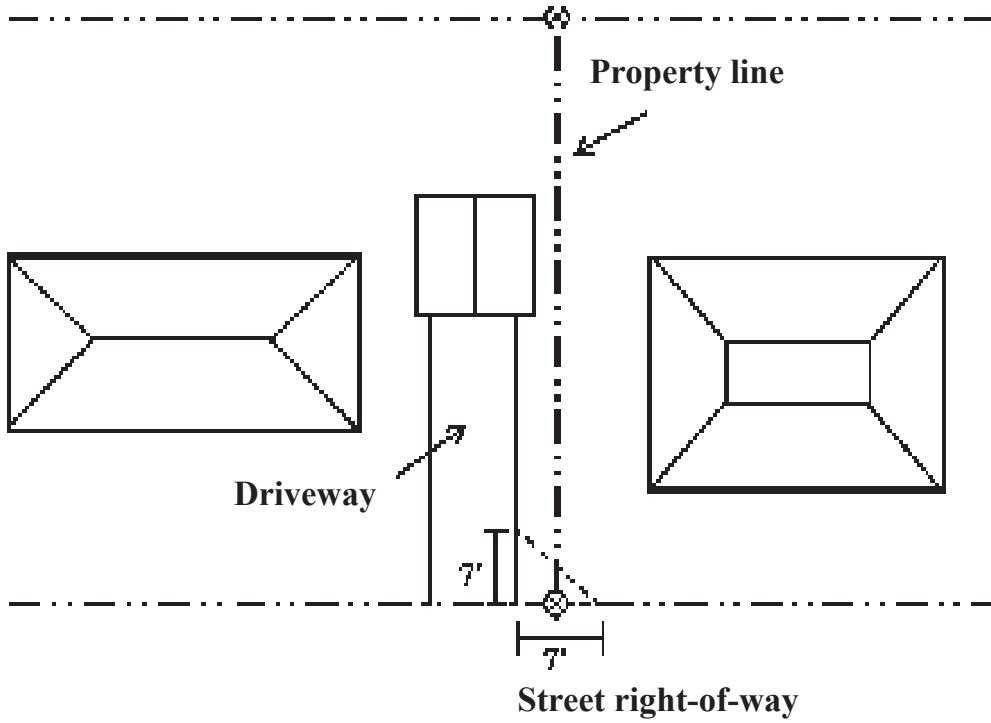
VMC 20.960.030 categorically prohibits any sign that substantially obstructs free and clear vision of exit, traffic intersection entrance, traffic sign or signal, or constitute a traffic hazard.



**AREA TO BE MAINTAINED FREE OF VISIBILITY OBSTRUCTIONS**



Vancouver WA Zoning Ordinance



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**Vision clearance requirement for private driveway**

(M-3701, Amended, 05/02/2005, Sec. 37; M-3643, Added, 01/26/2004)



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

**Paula J. Hammond, P.E.**  
Secretary of Transportation

**Southwest Region**

11018 Northeast 51st Circle/P.O. Box 1709  
Vancouver, WA 98668-1709  
360-905-2000/Fax360-905-2222

TTY: 1-800-833-6388  
[www.wsdot.wa.gov](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov)

January 13, 2009

City Manager's Office  
Richard Landis  
210 E. 13th Street  
PO Box 1995  
Vancouver, WA 98668-1995

**Subject:** Signs on overpasses

Dear Mr. Landis,

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment and clear up any concerns about signs on overpasses. There was some confusion on what was or was not allowed as far as signs go on the overpasses, that are visible to the state highway system. This letter will address any type of signs on an overpass, not just political signs.

The WSDOT position on any type of sign that is visible to the state highway system from any overpass is clear. The WSDOT does not allow any type of sign to be attached to the overpass structure in any way. No sign standard or stand holding a sign can block the sidewalk or be on the roadway surface of the overpass in any way. An individual can't stand in one place with a sign of any type on the overpass.

What is allowed is an individual may walk back and forth across the overpass with a sign that is visible to the highway system. The sign that is being carried should not be so big that it is unsafe for the person to carry or have the possibility to fall off the overpass into traffic below.

These are the RCW's and WAC's that pertain to all types of signs. RCW's 47.36.180(1), 47.42.030, 47.42.040(3) 47.42.062(1), 47.42.080 and WAC's 468-66.020(1), 468-66-030(e), 468-66-050 Type 3(d)(i)(ii).

If you have any questions, please contact Chad Hancock at (360) 905-2240.

Sincerely,

Chad Hancock  
WSDOT SW Region Traffic Engineer



proud past, promising future

CLARK COUNTY  
WASHINGTON

BOARD OF CLARK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Tom Mielke • Marc Boldt • Steve Stuart

February 16, 2010

Dear Candidates and Committee Members:

Election season often prompts questions and concerns about placement of political signs. With this letter we would like to ensure that you are familiar with local regulations, policies and practices, which reflect widespread community support to keep rights of way clear of clutter.

Requirements are as follows:

- A special registration must be obtained to place political signs in unincorporated Clark County. Applications are available at no cost from the Department of Community Development, P.O. Box 9810, 1300 Franklin Street, Vancouver 98666. An application is enclosed with this packet. Mail in applications are accepted or apply at Permit Services - hours are 8 a.m.-noon, Monday to Friday, except Wednesday, when they are open until 4 p.m.
- Signs may not be placed in locations that would constitute traffic hazards. If you are advised by this office of a hazardous placement, please remove the sign at your earliest convenience.
- Political signs must be removed within 15 days of the election. Campaigns with a master map of sign locations and a pickup schedule will find it easier to comply.
- Please avoid displaying political signs that resemble traffic control signs.

In addition to these requirements, it is our custom to request that candidates and promoters of ballot measures voluntarily commit to keep signs out of rights of way. A diagram showing recommended placement along roads is enclosed to assist you in complying with this request. A copy of the commitment form also is included. Please file this form along with your registration application.

If you have any questions, please call the Community Development Department at 397-2375 extension 4080, or visit their office at 1300 Franklin St. in Vancouver.

Thank you for your cooperation and I wish you the best of luck on all your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

Steve Stuart, Chair

Enclosures

- Registration Application
- Diagram of sign placement

Submit to:  
Department of Community Development  
Permit Services Division  
1300 Franklin Street  
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810  
(360) 397-2375

File No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

**APPLICATION/REGISTRATION FOR POLITICAL SIGN PLACEMENT**

**WE THE UNDERSIGNED**, hereby make application under the terms of Section 40.310.010, Clark County Code, to erect political signs.

Applicant Name:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number:

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of signs:

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF PERSON RUNNING FOR OFFICE OR BALLOT REFERENDUM #

\_\_\_\_\_

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR REMOVAL OF SIGNS

Name:

Phone:

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant:

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by the Director of Planning this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_

Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

**CLARK COUNTY**  
**SIGN PLACEMENT COMMITMENT**

**The undersigned candidate or committee official hereby agrees that best efforts will be employed to ensure that political signs of such candidate (or ballot propositions) will not be placed within road rights-of-way.**

**Name of candidate / ballot proposition:**

\_\_\_\_\_

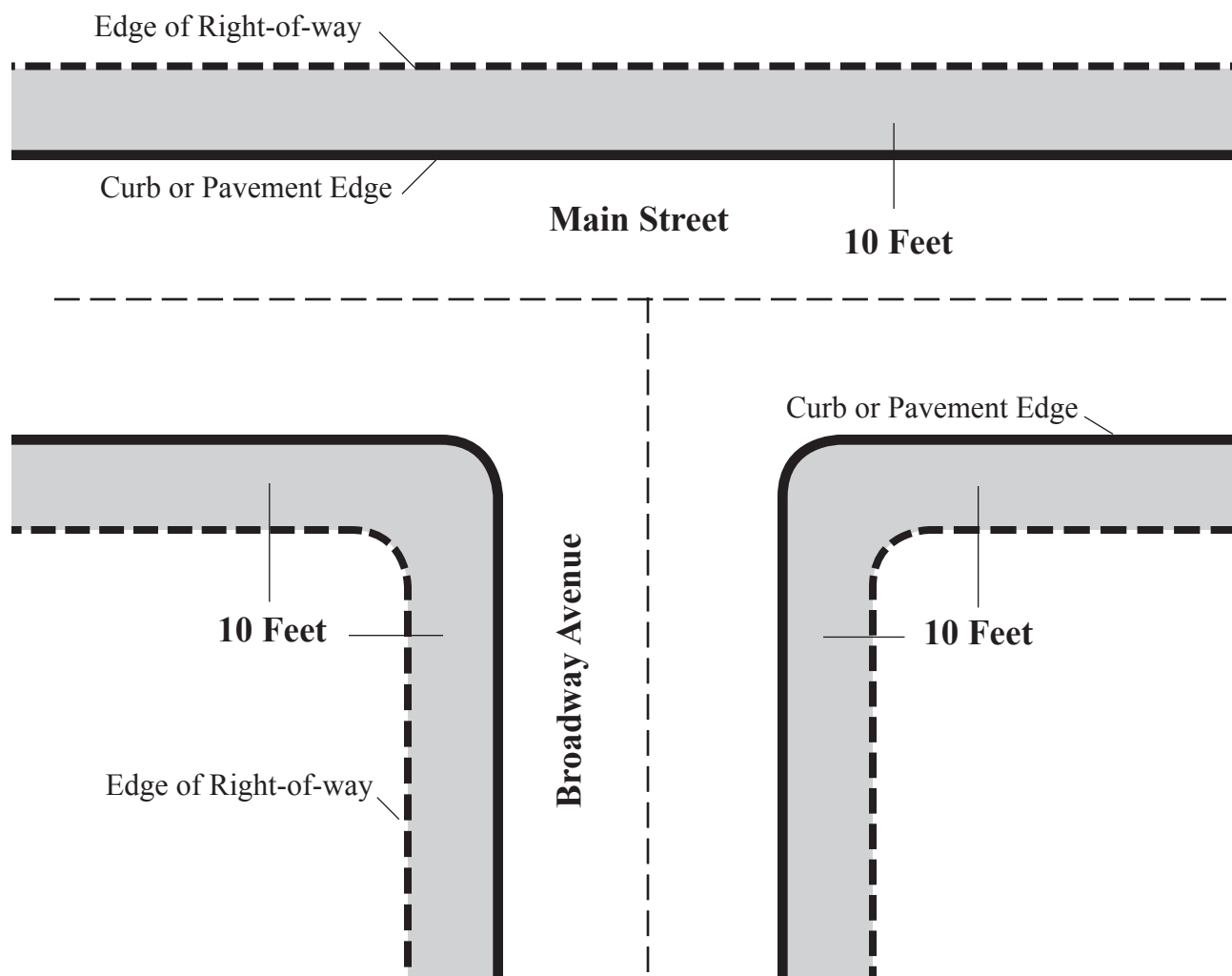
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

# CLARK COUNTY

## Placement Diagrams for Political Signs

*We discourage the placement of signs over 3 feet in height upon public property. CCC 40.350.030 prohibits placement in such a manner as to obstruct the vision of motorists. Removal of all political signs is required after the election.*

**Diagram #1**



Dear Candidate:

The Washington State Department of Transportation wishes to take this opportunity to advise political candidates about the placement of campaign signs and placards along state highways.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 47.42, the Highway Advertising Control Act, regulates signing on Interstate highways, primary highways, and highways that are part of the Scenic and Recreational system. Signs erected on private property adjacent to these highways must comply with the Highway Advertising Control Act, rules contained in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 468-66, and applicable local agency sign codes.

In accordance with WAC 468-66-050, ***Sign Classifications***, political campaign signs are considered a Type 3(d) on-premise sign for which no fee or application is necessary. Temporary political campaign signs are signs which express the property owner's endorsement of a political candidate or ballot issue, with the following restrictions:

- 1) Temporary political campaign signs are limited to a maximum size of thirty-two square feet
- 2) Temporary political campaign signs must be removed within ten days following the election
- 3) Sign installers must have permission of the underlying property owner prior to placing signs
- 4) Temporary political campaign signs are subject to all other applicable provisions of RCW 47.42 and WAC 468-66 that pertain to Type 3 on-premise signs

In addition to the above restrictions, **the erection of temporary political campaign signs within the right-of-way of all state highways is prohibited. Accordingly, signs placed within the right-of-way of any state highway are subject to removal by the Department of Transportation.**

Also, RCW 47.36.180(1) states in part that it is unlawful to erect any structure, sign, or device visible from a city street, county road, or state highway that simulates any directional, warning, or danger sign likely to be mistaken for such a sign. Therefore, a campaign sign cannot be designed in a manner that resembles an official traffic control sign.

If you should have any questions about the placement of campaign signs along state highways, please contact Pat O'Leary at (360)-705-7296 or [olearyp@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:olearyp@wsdot.wa.gov).

We sincerely hope that candidates for public office will observe the laws and regulations enacted to limit driver distraction and protect and preserve the roadside beauty of our state. Thank you in advance for your courtesy in this matter,

*Washington State Department of Transportation*