City of Portland, Oregon
Bureau of Development Services
Plan Review / Permitting Services
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

To: Political Candidates – 2012

Subject: Posting of Political Signs in the City of Portland

We are approaching another political campaign season and the City of Portland, Bureau of Development Services would like to provide a friendly reminder about the use and placement of political campaign signs.

Although the City of Portland's Sign Code does not provide regulations that are specific to political campaign signs, there are standards which address the types of signs typically used in political campaigns. These regulations apply to all signs on private property, regardless of the text of the sign.

If you have questions about signs or registration requirements, please visit the Development Services Center located at 1900 SW 4th Avenue (open Tuesday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) or e-mail bdssignpermits@portlandoregon.gov or telephone 503-823-7996.

The three typical political signs that are used in the City of Portland are described below with the definition for use.

Lawn Signs: Lawn signs are defined as freestanding signs, made of lightweight materials, such as cardboard, vinyl or plastic pressboard, which are supported by a frame, pole or other structure and placed directly in the ground. Lawn signs are allowed without permit but must meet the standards of City of Portland Title 32, Section 32.32.030.J. There is no limit on the number of lawn signs, but each sign may not be larger than 3 square feet on a single pole or stake. These signs are allowed on private property only and may not be illuminated. These signs are not allowed in rights-of way such as sidewalks, street medians, traffic islands, planting strips or freeway entrance/exits.

Temporary Banners: Banners are signs made of fabric or other similar non-rigid material. Banners are not enclosed in a framework but are either anchored at 4 corners or along two edges. Banners can not contain any electrical components or lighting. While banners are allowed in any zone, except sites with houses, duplexes, or attached houses, the limitations in size differ depending on the zone and use of the property (Section 32.32.030.K.3). These signs are not allowed in rights-of way such as sidewalks, street medians, traffic islands, planting strips or freeway entrance/exits.

Temporary Wall Signs and Freestanding Signs: Temporary wall (fascia) signs may be posted on building walls located only in RX, C, E and I zones (Section 32.32.030.K.5). These signs are prohibited in other zones. Each sign may be no larger than 32 square feet. No more than one sign may be posted on any building wall and may not extend above roof lines. **Temporary freestanding signs**, those placed directly on the ground, are also only allowed in the RX, C, E and I zones (Section 32.32.030.5.6). Each sign may be no larger than 32 square feet in area. A sign may have two faces of 32 square feet, provided the 2 faces are within 90 degrees of each other. A second such sign is allowed on larger sites with more than 300 feet of arterial street frontage. The height of temporary freestanding signs varies between 15 and 25 feet, depending on the zone. These signs are not allowed in rights-of way such as sidewalks, street medians, traffic islands, planting strips or freeway entrance/exits. **Temporary wall signs and freestanding signs** may be posted without permit or registration provided they meet the above standards. Each sign may be erected for no more than 180 days. See attached flyer for more details regarding temporary freestanding signs.

Again, please feel free to contact us either by phone, e-mail or by visiting the DSC with any questions about signs for your campaign.

Helpful Information

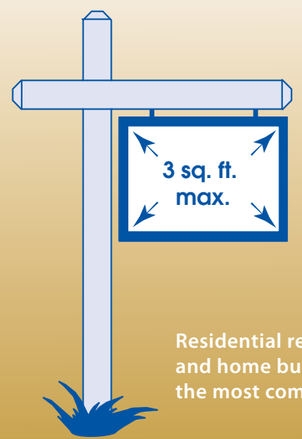
Bureau of Development Services
City of Portland, Oregon
1900 SW 4th Avenue, Portland, OR 97201
www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

General Office Hours:
Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
BDS main number: 503-823-7300

Permit Information is available at the following location:
Development Services Center (First Floor)
For Hours Call 503-823-7310 | Select option 1

Permitting Services (Second Floor)
For Hours Call 503-823-7310 | Select option 4

Portable Signs	503-823-7891
Signs, except portable	503-823-7379
BDS main line	503-823-7300
DSC automated information line	503-823-7310
Zoning information	503-823-7526
Permit information	503-823-7363
Transportation (PDOT)	
Banners in rights-of-way	503-823-5179
Sidewalk issues	503-823-3467
City of Portland TTY	503-823-6868



Residential real estate signs and home business signs are the most common lawn signs

Examples of a properly displayed temporary lawn sign and a temporary freestanding sign

The information in this publication is an overview of portable and temporary sign regulations. Please contact BDS staff to get more detailed information. Sign fee information, permit applications and registration forms are available online and in the Development Services Center (DSC).

A clear pedestrian pathway is required between a portable/a-board sign and any other object or display on the sideway, as in the case of a sidewalk cafe.

Banners must be securely mounted on a structure.

For more detailed information regarding the bureau's hours of operation and available services;

Visit our Web site
www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

Online the Signs information, is located under the Permits tab | in the drop-down choose Signs.

Note: All information in this brochure is subject to change.

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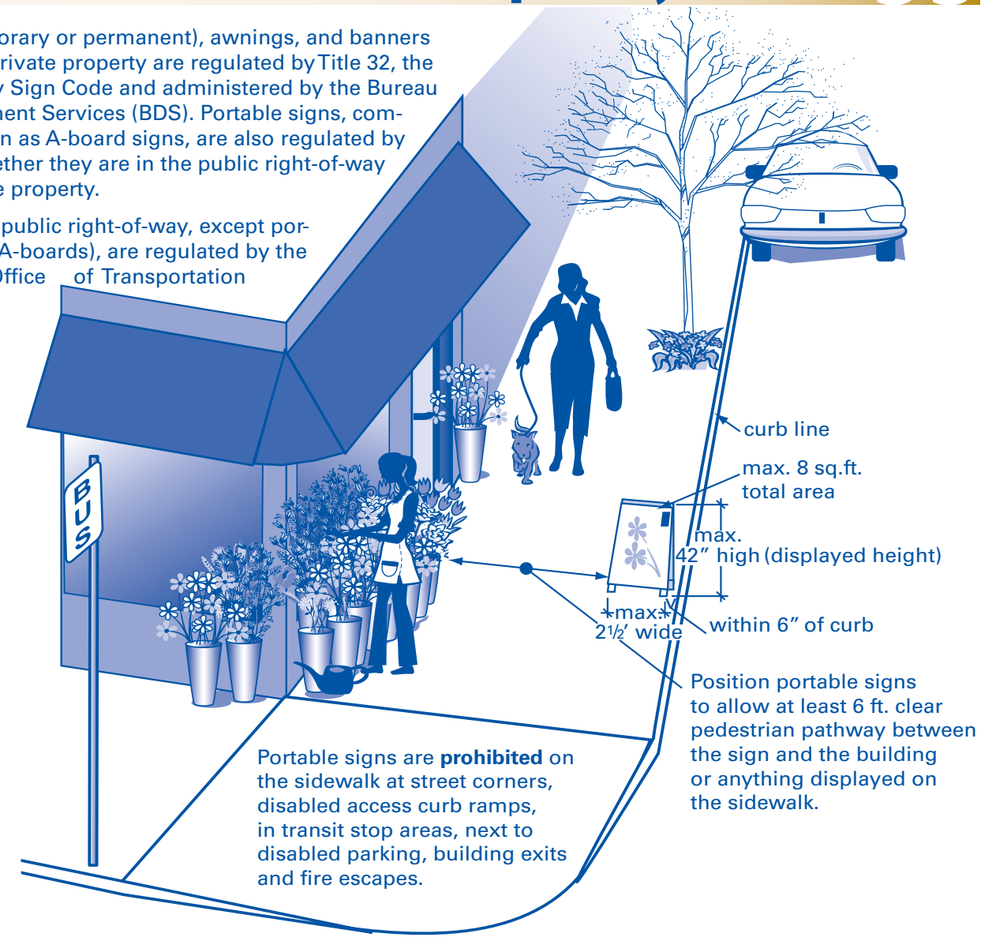
Signs: Portable and Temporary

33

CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON - BUREAU OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
1900 SW 4th Avenue, Portland, Oregon 97201 • 503-823-7300 • www.portlandoregon.gov/bds

Signs (temporary or permanent), awnings, and banners located on private property are regulated by Title 32, the Portland City Sign Code and administered by the Bureau of Development Services (BDS). Portable signs, commonly known as A-board signs, are also regulated by Title 32, whether they are in the public right-of-way or on private property.

Signs in the public right-of-way, except portable signs (A-boards), are regulated by the Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT).



Type of Sign	Definition
Portable	Movable sign that is not attached to a structure or the ground, includes: A-boards, portable reader-boards and similar signs.
Temporary portable	Movable sign with specific limited display times, typically used for real estate open houses, garage sales and other temporary events, but may not be used regularly in same location.
Banner	A sign made of fabric or other similar non-rigid material supported or anchored at four corners or along top with weighted bottom. A larger banner will require additional support and anchor points.
Balloon	Examples include giant inflatable balloons, hot air or flying ballons, fly guys/air dancers and balloon sculpture/arches.
Flag	A sign made of fabric or other similar non-rigid material supported or anchored along one edge or two corners. If any side is more than three times as long as any other side the flag becomes a banner.
Temporary fascia/ freestanding	Registration through BDS when displayed for more than one year
Portable signs can only be placed on the right-of-way adjacent to the property where the sign is registered or on the private property where the sign is registered. They cannot be placed across the street or a neighboring property.	

* For information about permanent signs (other than portable permanent signs) and awnings, please visit the BDS Web site at www.portlandoregon.gov/bds, select the Pemits tab then Signs and Other Permits.

	Portable	Banner and Balloon			Temporary Fascia and Freestanding
Size	In public rights-of-way, signs may not exceed a total 8 sq. ft. in area, with a maximum of 4 ft. (42 inches displayed height) tall and maximum of 2 ft. (30 inches) wide.	**ZONE**	**Temporary**	**Permanent**	**Lawn signs:** up to 3 sq. ft. of sign is allowed on a single support.
		OS, R, CN, CO1, CM	32 sq. ft.	32 sq. ft.	**Temporary fascia/wall and freestanding signs:** may be no larger than 32 sq. ft. in area.
		CS, CX	50 sq. ft.	100 sq. ft.	
	On private property the sign may be as large as 12 sq. ft.	CO2, CG, E, I	100 sq. ft.	200 sq. ft.	**Temporary freestanding signs:** may have two faces of 32 sq. ft. in area, provided the two faces are within 90 degrees of each other.
		Balloon signs may not be permanent and the maximum height is 25 ft.			
Number	Limited to the number of public entrances per building or buildings on the site. Multiple doors at one entrance count as a single entrance. If there are multiple tenants in a building, which share the same public entrance, only one sign can be registered. Tenants and property owner should coordinate the registration and display of a portable sign.	Up to three small **banners,** under 32 sq. ft. each, may be displayed per site without a registration, if you place only one per exterior wall or structure.			**Lawn:** no limit.
		Permanent **banners** are treated as permanent signs and must follow code for permanent signs.			**Temporary fascia:** one per street frontage.
		Only one **balloon sign** per site is allowed and must be registered.			**Temporary freestanding:** one per site, larger sites may install one per 300 lineal ft. of arterial street frontage.
	For sites without buildings, such as surface parking lots, each vehicle entrance counts as one entrance, limited to four portable signs.				
	One sign for businesses with service windows, but no public entrance.				
Location, Zoning and Mounting	Permanent portable signs are allowed and registered only in: **RX** (Central Residential), **C** (Commercial), **E** (Employment), or **I** (Industrial) zones, all other zones prohibited.	**Banners** must be securely mounted on a structure.			**Lawn:** allowed in all zones, but must be placed on private property only
	In the public right-of-way (streets and sidewalks), these signs must be within 6 inches of curb and must allow a clear pedestrian path no less than 6 ft. wide.	**Balloon signs** restricted to **RX** (Central Residential), **C** (Commercial), **E** (Employment), or **I** (Industrial) and may be located on a building rooftop.			**Temporary fascia / freestanding**: restricted to **RX** (Central Residential), **C** (Commercial), **E** (Employment), or **I** (Industrial).
	Portable signs are prohibited at street corners, transit stop areas, disabled access curb ramps, disabled parking spaces, at building exits or fire escapes, any portion of the street (medians, traffic islands, and parking areas), pedestrian pathways, bicycle paths, and sidewalks less than 8 ft. wide.				**Temporary fascia:** attached parallel to and not to extend from the façade, must not be attached to fire escapes, and not to exceed 6 inches above roof line.
	Portable signs can only be placed on the right-of-way adjacent to the property where the sign is registered or on the private property where the sign is registered. They cannot be placed across the street or a neighboring property.				**Temporary freestanding:** may have two faces, either back-to-back or at a 90 degree angle to each other.
Display Period	**Temporary portable signs:** (real estate open house, garage sale and other temporary events) may be displayed only between 6:00 pm Friday and 8:00 pm Sunday and from 6:00 am to 1:00 pm on Tuesday. May not be used at the same location regularly and must remain temporary.	**Banners** are limited to 180 calendar days per year.			**Temporary fascia / freestanding signs**: up to two consecutive 180-day periods without a permit or registration. A longer display period requires registration.
		Balloon signs are limited to a maximum of one week per calendar year.			
Prohibitions	Signs must remain portable and cannot be attached to the ground, pavement, street trees, light or utility poles, sign poles, parking meters, street furniture, etc.	**Banner** display on roofs, trees or other landscaping is prohibited.			**Lawn:** prohibited in the public right-of-way which includes the street area, sidewalks and the planting strip.
		Banners are prohibited on single family houses and duplexes.			
	Not allowed in the right-of-way in the Hillsdale Plan District.	More than 4 temporary **banners** on one site is prohibited.			No lights, other electrical components or changing image features.
	No lights, other electrical components or changing image features.				**Temporary:** may not extend into the right-of-way or on the roof.
	Not to exceed 12 sq. ft. in area.				
Registration	Each **portable** sign requires a separate registration, the registration options are listed on the registration form, these include: a one year or two year registration, or paying a one time fee.	**Banners:** larger than 32 sq. ft. or the fourth banner on a site must be registered.			**Lawn:** no registration
		Balloon signs must be registered.			**Temporary Fascia/Freestanding:** may be displayed for two consecutive 180 day periods without permit or registration. A longer display period requires registration and is limited to additional 360 days.
	Registration forms and permit applications are available online at www.portlandoregon.gov/bds and in the Development Services Center (DSC) at 1900 SW 4th Avenue.				
Inspections	Inspections are random or complaint based.	Inspections are random or complaint based.			Inspections are random or complaint based.
	Citations may be issued for improper placement, unregistered signs or improperly registered signs.	Citations may be issued for improper placement, unregistered signs or improperly registered signs.			Citations may be issued for improper placement, unregistered signs or improperly registered signs.
	Citations include a fine for the first infraction, if the same sign is cited three times, BDS will impound the sign and revoke the registration and/or prohibit future registration.				
Exemptions	Interior displays and inside windows are exempt.	Interior displays and inside windows are exempt.			**Lawn:** exempt from registration with BDS.
	Portable signs: exempt from Design Review.	**Banners:** in rights-of-way are regulated by PBOT.			
		Flags: exempt regardless of size or content.			