



# CITY OF BURLINGTON

## CODE ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

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Political Signs: Signs that are erected in connection with elections or political campaigns provided that:

Such signs shall not be placed out earlier than thirty (30) days prior to the beginning date of "one stop" early voting and are to be removed within ten (10) days after the primary or election day.

Signs placed in the City or State right-of-way must be placed in compliance with the following:

- a. No sign shall be permitted in the right-of-way of a fully controlled access highway.
- b. No sign shall be closer than three feet from the edge of pavement.
- c. No sign shall obscure motorist visibility at an intersection.
- d. No sign shall be higher than 42 inches above the edge of the pavement of the road.
- e. Such signs shall not exceed 6 square feet in sign face area.
- f. No sign shall obscure or replace another sign.

Signs placed on individual lots must be placed in compliance with the following:

- a. No sign shall be taller than five feet above adjacent grade.
- b. No sign shall have a sign face larger than 32 square feet.

Additionally:

Political signs may not be placed on utility poles or traffic control devices.

Political signs may not be illuminated.

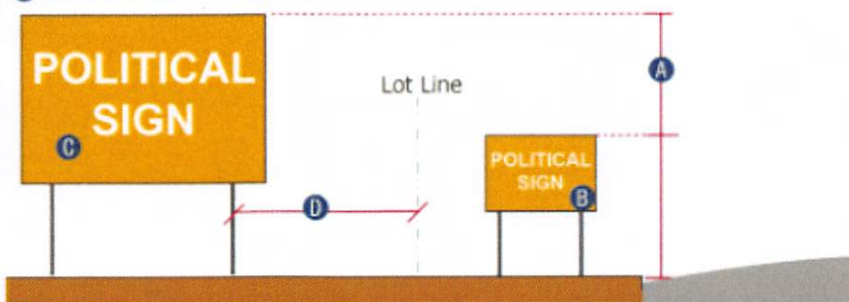
Political signs shall not be placed within required sight distance triangles or in locations that obstruct the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

Signs found to be in violation of this section 30 days after the period prescribed herein may be removed by City of Burlington Code Enforcement Officers. (Amendment adopted November 1, 2019)

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**TABLE 5.6.I: SIGN STANDARDS BY SIGN TYPE****7. Political Signs****LEGEND**

- A** Maximum Height = 60" Above Adjacent Grade When on an Individual Lot; 42" Above Pavement of Adjacent Roadway when in a Street Right-of-Way
- B** Maximum Sign Face Area within ROW = 6 sf
- C** Maximum Sign Face Area on a Lot = 32 sf
- D** No Min. Setback from Lot Line



<b>a. Definition</b>	Any sign that advocates for a particular political candidate, party, position, or political action that is made available for view by the public before and during the portion of a calendar year when elections are underway as described in Section 136-32 of the North Carolina General Statutes. Political signs are also referred to as "campaign" signs or "election" signs. Signs of a political nature that are placed on private property outside the period of time when elections are underway shall be considered as an incidental sign.							
	<b>b. Zoning Districts Where Permitted</b>	<b>RESIDENTIAL &amp; CR</b>	<b>MX &amp; PD</b>	<b>OI &amp; COI</b>	<b>NB</b>	<b>GB &amp; CB</b>	<b>CBD &amp; PDD</b>	<b>INDUSTRIAL &amp; CI</b>
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
<b>c. Dimensional Standards</b>								
Maximum Number of Political Signs Per Lot				6 [1]				
Maximum Height				In a right-of-way		42 inches above the edge of the pavement of the adjacent roadway		
				On an individual lot		60 inches above adjacent grade		
Maximum Sign Face Area				In a right-of-way		6 square feet per sign		
				On an individual lot		32 square feet per sign		
Minimum Setback from any Lot Line				None				
Minimum Separation between Political Signs				[2]				
<b>NOTES:</b>								
[1] There is no limit on the number of political signs that may be placed within the right-of-way in front of a lot during the portion of the year when elections are underway provided the owner of the sign obtains the consent of the lot's owner to place the sign in front of the lot.								
[2] No political sign may be placed in any manner that obscures another sign from view.								
<b>d. Additional Standards</b>								
i. Political signs shall not be placed within required sight distance triangles or in locations that obstruct the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians.								
ii. Political signs may not be placed on utility poles or traffic control signal poles.								
iii. Political signs may be placed in the right-of-way only during the period of time when elections are underway as identified in Section 136-32 of the North Carolina General Statutes.								
iv. Political signs may not be illuminated.								
v. Political signs found to be in violation of these standards or the applicable standards in Section 136-32 of the North Carolina General Statutes may be removed by the Zoning/Subdivision Administrator.								

**§ 136-32. Regulation of signs.**

(a) **Commercial Signs.** - No unauthorized person shall erect or maintain upon any highway any warning or direction sign, marker, signal or light or imitation of any official sign, marker, signal or light erected under the provisions of G.S. 136-30, except in cases of emergency. No person shall erect or maintain upon any highway any traffic or highway sign or signal bearing thereon any commercial or political advertising, except as provided in subsections (b) through (e) of this section: Provided, nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the erection or maintenance of signs, markers, or signals bearing thereon the name of an organization authorized to erect the same by the Department of Transportation or by any local authority referred to in G.S. 136-31. Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this section shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor. The Department of Transportation may remove any signs erected without authority or allowed to remain beyond the deadline established in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) **Compliant Political Signs Permitted.** - During the period beginning on the 30<sup>th</sup> day before the beginning date of "one-stop" early voting under G.S. 163-227.2 and ending on the 10<sup>th</sup> day after the primary or election day, persons may place political signs in the right-of-way of the State highway system as provided in this section. Signs must be placed in compliance with subsection (d) of this section and must be removed by the end of the period prescribed in this subsection. Any political sign remaining in the right-of-way of the State highway system more than 30 days after the end of the period prescribed in this subsection shall be deemed unlawfully placed and abandoned property, and a person may remove and dispose of such political sign without penalty.

(c) **Definition.** - For purposes of this section, "political sign" means any sign that advocates for political action. The term does not include a commercial sign.

(d) **Sign Placement.** - The permittee must obtain the permission of any property owner of a residence, business, or religious institution fronting the right-of-way where a sign would be erected. Signs must be placed in accordance with the following:

- (1) No sign shall be permitted in the right-of-way of a fully controlled access highway.
- (2) No sign shall be closer than three feet from the edge of the pavement of the road.
- (3) No sign shall obscure motorist visibility at an intersection.
- (4) No sign shall be higher than 42 inches above the edge of the pavement of the road.
- (5) No sign shall be larger than 864 square inches.
- (6) No sign shall obscure or replace another sign.

(e) **Penalties for Unlawful Removal of Signs.** - It is a Class 3 misdemeanor for a person to steal, deface, vandalize, or unlawfully remove a political sign that is lawfully placed under this section.

(f) **Application Within Municipalities.** - Pursuant to Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes, a city may by ordinance prohibit or regulate the placement of political signs on rights-of-way of streets located within the corporate limits of a municipality and maintained by the municipality. Any such ordinance shall provide that any political sign that remains in a right-of-way of streets located within the corporate limits of a municipality and maintained by the municipality more than 30 days after the end of the period prescribed in the ordinance is to be deemed unlawfully placed and abandoned property, and a person may remove and dispose of such political sign without penalty. In the absence of an ordinance prohibiting or regulating the placement of political signs on the rights-of-way of streets located within a municipality and maintained by the municipality, the provisions of subsections (b) through (e) of this section shall apply. (1921, c. 2, s. 9(b); C.S., s. 3846(r); 1927, c. 148, ss. 56, 58; 1933, c. 172, s. 17; 1957, c. 65, s. 11; 1973, c. 507, s. 5; 1977, c.

464, s. 7.1; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 1030, s. 39; 1993, c. 539, s. 981; 1994, Ex. Sess., c. 24, s. 14(c); 2011-408, s. 1; 2017-6, s. 3; 2018-146, ss. 3.1(a), (b), 6.1; 2019-119, s. 1.)