



City of Takoma Park Sign Information

Sign Information: City Council suspends the law banning the posting of signs in the City right of way; There are some exceptions, and there are some courtesies!

It is election season and yard signs are appearing around the City of Takoma Park. In past years, posting signs in the right of way (generally the area that includes a street, median, tree lawn, sidewalk, and/or other areas not part of a property lot) was prohibited. This year, the City Council has passed [Ordinance 2020-19](#), an ordinance that suspends the law banning the posting of signs in the City right of way. There are some exceptions related to this ordinance, and there are some courtesies we encourage all to practice.

1. City staff has the authority to move or remove any sign that obscures blocks or otherwise interferes with a traffic sign, a vehicle sightline, or a sign put in place by a unit of government.
2. Signs that damage any building, structure, or fixture shall not be permitted.
3. Signs may not be placed on private property unless the owner has given permission. Signs on private property may not be removed by others.
4. Signs may not be placed on City property that is not right of way. So, unless specifically allowed at a polling place on Election Day, no signs will be permitted in the following locations:
 - a. On the Takoma Park Community Center property
 - b. On the Takoma Park Recreation Center property
 - c. Within any City park
5. Signs in the rights of way along City roads may be placed by anyone and removed by anyone. For that reason, I suggest a few courtesies:
 - a. Please don't post a sign in front of someone's home without asking them if it is okay. Note that if someone posts a sign in the right of way in front of your home, you do not need to leave it there – you are free to remove it. If you are supportive of a candidate or point of view and wish to post a sign near your home, it is better to post the sign on your private property than in the right of way.
 - b. Please be thoughtful when posting signs in or removing signs from the City right of way in places other than in front of your own home or business. These right of way locations include Laurel Avenue and Anne Street, which traditionally host farmers markets and may host other special community activities. In past years there was a great deal of frustration and anger about sign posting and removal. **In this very difficult time, please be considerate of each other and work to reduce tensions here in Takoma Park.** So, please let signs stay posted unless they are in front of your home or are causing a problem.

- c. When the election is over, please remove the signs. Signs cause clutter and can get into the stormwater system. If they are reusable, it's nice to return them to the applicable candidate.
6. While City staff will not proactively remove signs from the right of way unless they violate Ordinance 2020-19, Public Works staff may move or remove signs in an area of the right of way they are required to mow or maintain. If there are a number of signs in the way of maintenance work, the signs will be stacked nearby and candidates can collect them and repost them if they wish.
7. A number of rights of way in the City of Takoma Park are State Highway rights of way, such as along New Hampshire Avenue, Carroll Avenue, Philadelphia Avenue, Ethan Allen Avenue, East-West Highway, University Boulevard, and Piney Branch Road. Pursuant to State law, signs are not to be placed in State Highway rights of way. City of Takoma Park staff will not enforce this, however, unless the signs block sightlines or cause other problems as identified above.
8. Please be aware that other governmental, institutional or utility company staff may remove signs from their property or rights of way. For example, State officials may remove signs from State Highway rights of way, school or college staff may remove signs adjacent to school or college properties, County parks staff may remove signs from County parks, Pepco staff may remove signs from their utility poles, etc. Ordinance 2020-19 only pertains to signposting on rights of way owned by the City of Takoma Park.

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