

SAN DIEGO COUNTY
COMMUNITY SIGNS AND BANNERS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

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SAN DIEGO COUNTY

COMMUNITY SIGNS AND BANNERS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Community Standards

1. Will signs be required to comply with Community Design Review Area Regulations/Guidelines and established community plan issues, policies and goals?

With the exception of Neighborhood and Business Watch Signs which must comply with requirements established by local law enforcement, all Design Review Board standards apply. Signs will be required to comply with Community Design Review Area Regulations/Guidelines that are in effect for all adjacent parcels. Per program guidelines, Site Plan Permits (except for Neighborhood and Business Watch Signs) will be reviewed for consistency with applicable Community Design Guidelines and/or Community Plan and with the desired community character.

2. Will standards for signs & banners in the public right-of-way take priority over Community Design Review Area Regulations/Guidelines?

Within the road right-of-way, safety and operational criteria such as size limitations may take precedence over existing community design review board criteria.

3. Will the draft program allow for one street-spanning sign for each village within a community sub-region?

Yes. The program allows one street-spanning sign within in each village in a planning region.

Business Advertising

4. Will this program allow advertising like real estate signs or businesses?

No. Temporary real estate signs are currently permitted in the zoning ordinance and are regulated separately in Section 6207(b)(1). This program is separate and allows for permanent community oriented signs that have no allowable business sponsorship or advertising. This program allows for temporary event banners with 20% of banner face allowed for event sponsor information.

5. Any sign advertising a business not "on premise" that are visible from the State Highway System (SHS) will require an Outdoor Advertising Display Permit.

Signs with the purpose of advertising a business are not allowed with this community program.

6. This amendment is going to make the country landscape into a commercial sign zone.

No. This program does not allow any sponsorship on permanent community identification, community information, directional wayfinding or neighborhood watch signs. This program allows 20% of temporary event banners to identify an event sponsor.

Encroachment/Construction Permits

7. Are encroachment and construction permits required for the sign and sign installation?

An encroachment permit will be required for all facilities placed in County maintained right-of-way. A construction permit will be required for all sign types that require construction activity in the right-of-way to install permanent structures.

8. Will the program allow for an annual encroachment permit that can cover multiple pre-planned temporary banner installations?

No. The program will not allow for an annual blanket encroachment permit for multiple events. Individual encroachment permits are required to ensure consistency with the approved site plans. Additionally, individual encroachment permit applications cannot be submitted more than 90 days prior to an event and ensure first-come/first-serve priority.

9. Will existing signs in the right-of-way be grandfathered and will the replacement of any existing sign require a new permit?

No grandfathering is provided. All community signs in the public right-of-way require an approved site plan and encroachment permit.

Permittee Responsibilities

10. The overall costs for communities are going to be excessive. Is there a way for the County to reimburse local vendors for maintenance costs?

No. The Board of Supervisors directed an applicant driven process be developed in which applicants are solely responsible for all planning, permitting, design, installation, maintenance and removal costs.

11. Will the applicant hold all liability for installations?

Yes. Via standard encroachment permit language, the applicant will indemnify and defend the County of San Diego for all personal injury and property damage resulting from sign or banner installations in the public right-of-way.

12. The Department of Planning and Development Services does not have enforcement jurisdiction in the right-of-way. How will code compliance and the complaint process work? Does DPW handle enforcement in the right-of-way for un-permitted signs that pop up?

The Department of Public Works inspects encroachments in the right-of-way for enforcement. The Department of Planning and Development Services will have primary tasks in the application review and site plan permitting phases.

13. County should document penalties for illegal installations, should request use of law enforcement Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol to enforce, and establish a telephone hotline to report illegal installations.

The County has taken steps to facilitate reporting of potential violations. The Department of Public Works has "Road Service Request" forms and a telephone number posted on-line at www.sdcountry.ca.gov so that potential right-of-way violations can be reported. Planning and Development Services has code compliance contact information available on-line at www.sdcountry.ca.gov and regional storefronts in some communities to facilitate reporting of potential zoning violations.

14. In a case where the structure of a street spanning community identification sign can also be used as the support poles for a temporary event banner, can the permittee of the community identification sign control or restrict the use of the pole for temporary event banners?

No. The permit holder for the permanent street-spanning community identification sign cannot regulate the use of the structure for potential first-come/first-serve use of the structure as support poles for a separate permitted temporary event banner.

Permanent Signs

15. Is there anything in the program that would prevent or complicate the installation of public safety signage?

No. Public safety signage is regulated through County Code and the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. This program will not conflict with any safety signage and will specifically allow for the installation of neighborhood watch signs.

16. Can "High Fire Safety Danger" type of signs be included in this program?

No. These types of signs are outside the scope of this program. Fire safety signs and other general safety signs can potentially be allowed in the public right-of-way separately via standard encroachment permits.

Community Identification Signs

17. How many Community Identity Signs are allowed?

One sign may be located along each principal approach route to community village areas on County of San Diego General Plan Mobility Element Roads.

Community Information Sign

18. Can you allow a permanent community information sign on the ground with changeable community event shingles?

Yes. The program guidelines and proposed amendments have been expanded to include up to four permanent Community Information Signs in each village area as delineated in the General Plan that can have changeable event shingles.

Directional Wayfinding Signs

19. Will applicants individually apply for directional wayfinding shingles?

No. Applicants will work with community leaders to apply for an organized master plan system of directional wayfinding signs and shingles.

20. Directional wayfinding program should not lead the public onto any unsafe or substandard public or private road.

We concur and directional wayfinding signs can only point towards destinations that are on County Maintained General Plan Mobility Element Roads. Directional signs shall not point motorists onto residential collectors, residential streets, residential cul-de-sacs, roads that are public but not accepted for County Maintenance, or private roads.

21. Will the program allow wayfinding directions to individual wineries or breweries?

No. This program allows directional wayfinding signs that direct motorists to centers of a winery region located on a county maintained General Plan Mobility Element road. This program will not identify any winery or brewery by name or point to any single business or destination.

22. Is there a limit to the number of Directional Wayfinding Signs for each community?

Yes. Each community planning area will be limited to 50 Directional Wayfinding Signs.

Neighborhood and Business Watch Signs

23. Will an encroachment permit be required for each separate Neighborhood and/or Business Watch Sign that is planned to be installed on a single road, within a single subdivision, or in a single commercial district?

No. A single encroachment permit can be obtained for an organized set of installations on a single road, within a single subdivision, or in a single commercial district.

Temporary Banners

24. Banners should not be allowed too many days in advance of an event.

Banners shall be installed no more than 30 days before a community event and shall be removed within 7 days after the event. General community oriented placeholder banners for horizontal installation on light poles may be maintained between community events.

25. Does the program require a greater material specification for longer standing community placeholder banners, horizontal or vertical, than is required for event temporary banners?

No. This program requires all banners to be made from durable material that is capable of withstanding at least a 60 MPH wind without tearing, breaking away or collapse. Applicants have maintenance responsibility and may choose more durable materials for community placeholder banners where available.

26. Events such as church BBQ, parades, and fundraisers should not be too big.

Event size, for events in the public right-of-way or on private property, is regulated via the special event permit process. This program regulates the use of temporary banners within the public right-of-way to highlight a community's unique character or to announce a regulated community event.

27. How many County maintained street light poles are available countywide for vertical pole mounted banners?

There are approximately 6,500 County maintained street light poles.