



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** City Staff  
**FROM:** Joseph A. Melder, City Manager  
**DATE:** June 5, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** Information Regarding Campaign Signs and Use of City Facilities

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide you with information regarding the placement of campaign signs and a new policy regarding use of city facilities.

### Placement of Campaign Signs

1. No sign shall be erected or located on any street or right-of-way, curb, hydrant, lamppost, tree, rock or other natural feature, barricade, temporary walk, utility pole, public fence, fire alarm or police call box.
2. No sign maybe tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued or otherwise attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences or other objects.
3. No sign shall be erected that:
  - a. Obstructs the sight distance at an intersection or along a street right-of-way in the area known as the Visibility Triangle. The visibility triangle is formed by following the right-of-way lines of two (2) intersecting right-of-way lines for a distance of 40 feet from their point of intersection, and connecting these points with an imaginary line, thereby making a triangle.
  - b. Would tend by its location, color, use of colored lights or nature to be confused with or obstruct the view of traffic signs or traffic signals or may be construed as traffic control devices by motorists or pedestrians.
  - c. Uses admonitions such as "stop", "go", "slow", "danger", which might be confused with official traffic directional signs.
  - d. Imitates governmental signs to improve traffic safety signs.
4. The sign shall not exceed 16 square feet.
5. Signs shall not be located within a street right-of-way. Where sidewalks are in place, such sign may be located on the backside of the sidewalk, away from the street.
6. No sign shall be erected on property owned by the City of Savannah.
7. Property owner permission is required prior to placing signs on private property.
8. Limitations on the distribution of Handbills; defined as a written or printed notice displayed, handed out or posted to inform people.
  - a. No hand bills can be thrown or deposited on any vehicle.
  - b. No handbill can be thrown or deposited on any private property.
  - c. No handbill can be thrown, deposited or distributed on any private property that is posted with signage bearing the words: "No Trespassing", "No Vendors", "No Advertisement", or any similar notice.
  - d. Handbills can be handed or distributed to an individual willing to receive them.

## **Confiscation of campaign signs**

1. Improperly placed signs may be confiscated by the City's Code Compliance Department and all other City departments.
2. Confiscated signs will be held at the City's Sycamore lot located on Sycamore Street, the road directly South of Gadson Elementary School off May Road. Signs will be just inside the gate on the left hand side of the road. All city departments removing improperly placed signs should ensure all signs are taken to this location. Please contact the Code Compliance Department if you have any questions.
3. All confiscated signs will be disposed of three (3) days after the election.

## **Additional Information Regarding Campaign Signs**

The Code Compliance Department has updated guidance information to the public on the correct placement of campaign signs under City Code. These include photographic examples of correct and improper sign placement, and text on suitable and unsuitable sign locations. Information is also included on the signage confiscation and recovery process. Links to pertinent Code sections are provided as well. These updates will be placed on the Code Compliance webpage shortly.

### **Campaign Signs: Responses to Common Questions**

#### **1. Where may I place an election or political sign?**

Election or political message signs may be placed on a developed property, commercial or residential, with permission of the property owner, as long as they comply with all the other restrictions indicated in the City's Municipal Code. Absolutely no signage is permitted on City/public property, including public buildings, or improvements, and City maintained right of ways or easements. No sign shall be erected or located on any street or right-of-way, curb, or hydrant.

#### **2. Is there a time frame in which I can post campaign signs; i.e. before or after an election?**

No, an unlimited number of temporary signs displaying political or other noncommercial messages are permitted on private property at all times as long as the posting is done with the property owner's permission.

#### **3. Is there a size limit to the campaign signs posted on private property?**

Yes, there is a limit on the size of each individual sign. Signs shall not exceed 16 square feet.

#### **4. How does the City enforce these regulations?**

The Code Compliance Department within Government Operations is the City's lead on the enforcement of signs. However, other City Departments may also remove improperly placed signs.

Non-compliant signs placed in the right of way are subject to enforcement and will be removed immediately. In instances of signs placed on private property which do not follow City

regulations, the property owners will be notified, and abatement will be conducted. Any complaints regarding signs should be directed to the Code Compliance Department, who will investigate and take all necessary actions to bring the issue into compliance.

### 5. What does the City of Savannah do with removed signs?

In the event signs are confiscated, Code Compliance staff have been directed to place all signs at the City's Sycamore lot located on Sycamore Street, the road directly south of Gadsen Elementary School off May Road. Signs will be just inside the gate on the left-hand side of the

## The City of Savannah Municode

### Prohibited Locations 9.9.7

<http://online.encodeplus.com/regs/savannah-ga/doc-viewer.aspx?secid=5821>

### Prohibited Signs 9.9.8

<http://online.encodeplus.com/regs/savannah-ga/doc-viewer.aspx?secid=5822>

### Signs Allowed Without Permit 9.9.10

<https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/savannah-ga/doc-viewer.aspx?secid=5824#secid=5824>

### Examples of Properly and Improperly placed signage:

#### Improperly Placed on Right-of-way



#### Proper Placement on Private Property



#### Improper placement – Median not allowed



#### Proper Placement



**Policy Regarding Use of City-owned Facilities**

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
POLICY REGARDING USE OF PUBLICLY OWNED  
FACILITIES BY CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE AND  
ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR CAMPAIGN EVENTS**

It shall be the official policy of the City of Savannah that candidates for office including elected officials wishing to conduct campaign events or related activities in facilities owned by the City be treated no differently than any other person or organization not seeking office wishing to use public facilities.

Elected officials and candidates shall pay all required fees and costs.

No elected official or candidate shall receive preferential treatment or priority in the scheduling of events.

No candidate or elected official may seek, solicit, or demand, implicitly or explicitly, any preferential treatment when it comes to campaign events conducted in publicly owned facilities.

Unless offered to the general public in connection with any rental of City facilities, no City personnel or equipment can be used during campaign events.

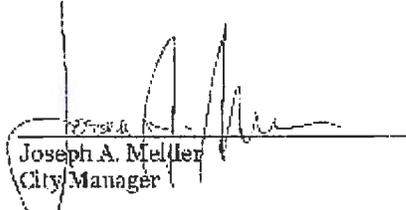
Some facilities may not be an appropriate space for any public use, including campaign events, and therefore may not be available for use.

No candidate or elected official, or any other person, may place or affix campaign-related materials or signage to publicly owned space.

No event officially sponsored by the City of Savannah by way of financial or in-kind support can feature official campaign-related programming.

Elected officials and candidates for office shall abide by all applicable local, state, and federal rules and regulations pertaining to the use of publicly owned facilities.

This 9<sup>th</sup> day of May 2023.

  
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Joseph A. Melder  
City Manager

Ratified by   
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R. Butes Lovett  
City Attorney